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Legion

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DoD

The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 2.7 million members. These wartime veterans, working through 15,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.

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**'The Embedded Editor'**

I just finished reading John Raughter's coverage of the war in Iraq (July) and, as a veteran and former reporter, I was most impressed with the accuracy, sense of perspective, lack of agenda bias and tell-it-like-it-is style. The national media, particularly the electronic types, cover the war with daily casualty box scores, and although technically accurate, leave one with a negative impression of our role there. Semper Fi.

— Tony Plattner, Tucson, Ariz.

I especially enjoyed "The Embedded Editor." Nice to know that someone in the media gets it and reports it the way it is supposed to be. I would like to make a correction, though. The term "the Talk" the writer refers to in reference to Cpl. Santos' daily duties is actually the "TOC" (Tactical Operations Center). Stay at it.

— Arlin A. Kramer Jr., Radcliff, Ky.

The interview with 1st Lt. Mohamed Raad, in my opinion, is one of the best articles I've seen in years. This person has put his life on the line for his country and has seen firsthand what a free country can be. It's time that Muslims in this country and others stand up for what they say they believe in. When they are silent, they allow the terrorists a stronghold. Until the Muslim community openly takes a stand against the terrorists, there will be no freedom in Iraq.

— Richard E. Bokern, Fort Wayne, Ind.

'The Balkan Blowback'

"The Balkan Blowback" (July) is right on the mark. It's time for politicians and the American people to wake up to the true facts about Kosovo, the Serbs, Draza Mihailovic, our sell-out to the communists, and the true agenda of Islamic

extremists, which is the total annihilation of Israel and the United States, and fundamentalist Islamic world domination. We should stop fighting the war on terror on their terms. We need to stop being so self-righteous and "humane" and take the gloves off, like we did with Germany and Japan in World War II.

— Richard G. Udell, Vale, Ore.

Julia Gorin ("The 'Successful War' We Lost in Kosovo") is not an impartial journalist nor a Balkan expert. The conflict between Albanians and Serbs in Kosovo is a purely ethnic-racial one. The Albanians are nominally Muslims, and unlike the Serbs' first cousins, the Bosnians, do not identify themselves with their religion but with their race.

— Bejko Kreshnik, Toronto

While the author certainly is entitled to her opinions and has a right to express those opinions, it causes me great concern that many of the statements she makes are not true.

As the commander of the Kosovo Forces' Multi-National Task Force (East), I see firsthand the progress that has been made in the region. I see firsthand the actions of our soldiers and the tireless efforts they make toward maintaining

a safe and secure environment for all the people of Kosovo, regardless of their ethnic or religious backgrounds.

Gorin makes false claims, including “a Serb a day is killed in Kosovo,” that Kosovo Serbs live in “barbed-wire-enclosed, KFOR-guarded perimeters of a few kilometers – beyond which they dare not venture” and that “NATO troops are directed to flee rather than return fire.”

We do not see a Serb a day killed in Kosovo, nor do they live in guarded perimeters with NATO protection. We frequently patrol Kosovo Serbian villages, but they are free to leave their homes to shop, to work and to visit friends and family. Our soldiers have strict rules on the use of lethal force, and we will always use the minimum force necessary to defuse a situation. But to defend themselves or innocent citizens, our soldiers will react with the level of force necessary to deal with the threat.

Gorin goes on to write that “Serbian nuns continue to be killed” and “churches and monasteries continue to be destroyed.” Again, these claims are false. Our contacts in the Serbian Orthodox Church confirmed for us that the last act of violence against a nun or priest in Kosovo was in 2006 when someone threw rocks at a Serbian priest while he was traveling. There have also been no churches or monasteries destroyed in Kosovo since 2004.

The situation in Kosovo is far from perfect. There are still feelings of mistrust between ethnic groups, and there is much work to be done to improve the infrastructure and economy. But the important thing is that progress is being made. Every day we see more signs of cooperation between ethnic groups,



On a recent visit to the U.S. military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany, American Legion National Commander Paul A. Morin and American Legion Auxiliary National President JoAnn Cronin were struck by two things: the professionalism and outstanding care provided by medical personnel in what can only be described as the “emergency room of the war,” and by a need of comfort items for patients recovering there.

The officers and staff at Landstuhl deserve much credit for dramatically improving survivability rates among those who suffer battlefield injuries. Their work is outstanding, compassionate and effective.

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and we see more signs of progress toward a bright future for Kosovo. For anyone wanting accurate, up-to-date and first-hand information about our mission in Kosovo, I invite them to visit our public-information Web site at www.kfor8.com.

– Brig. Gen. Douglas B. Earhart,
Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo

Soon, our new commander-in-chief will have to deal with the results of the “successful” Kosovo war, and more people will die. But the press will assure us that it’s nothing important because the dead are non-Muslims. The leftist media will be allowed to rewrite history again. The American people will accept it again as truth.

– Robert S. Cichowski, Winter Haven, Fla.

‘Rescue in Bosnia’

The Marines who rescued Scott O’Grady in Bosnia were, I am sure, well-trained, physically fit and well-armed, but I am guessing they were not carrying 50-mm machine guns. What the

author meant to describe in his article, I suspect, was either the standard 7.62-mm medium machine gun or possibly the venerable “Ma-Deuce” .50-caliber (12.7mm) Browning M-2. Even Marines are not going to be carrying a 50-mm machine gun anywhere.

– Don Kaag, Moscow, Idaho

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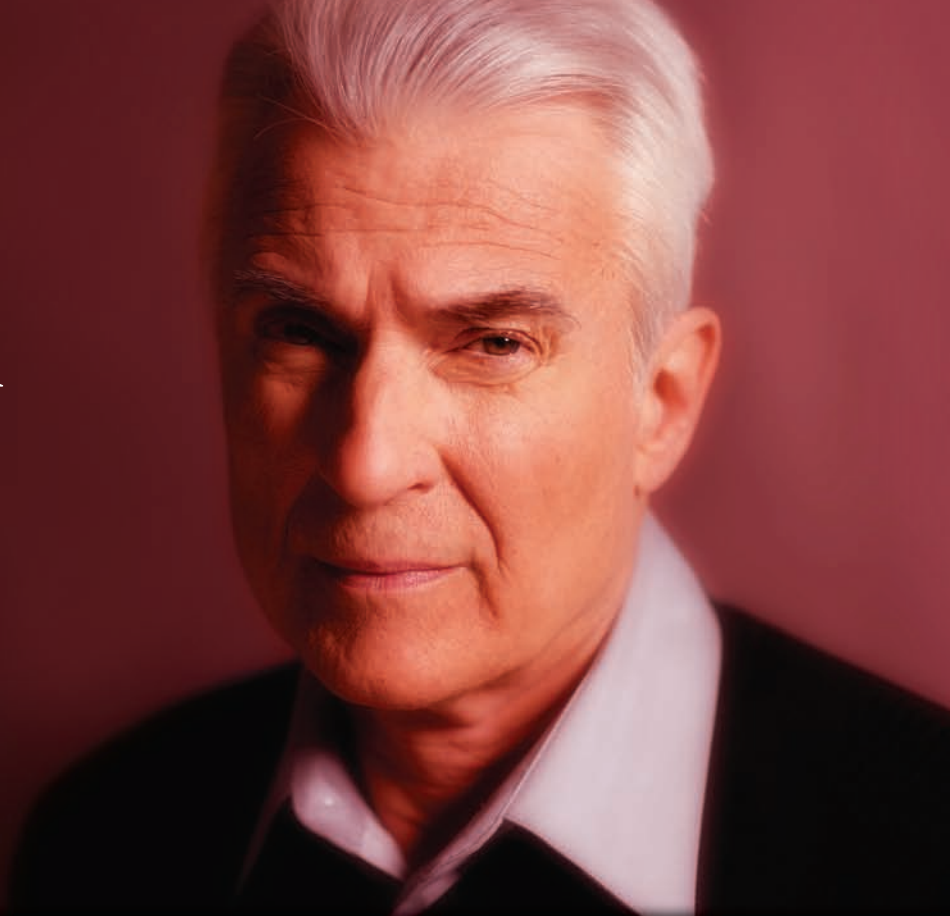
Thank you, Commander Morin. In your July message, “Veterans Deserve Better Than Rations,” you state that VA health-care funding is doled out not according to veteran needs but according to government willingness to pay. You hit the problem right on the button. Unfortunately, veterans themselves are part of the problem. The Bush administration and members of Congress find billions of dollars to rebuild Iraq and take care of illegal immigrants, yet they can’t find enough money to build VA hospitals or take care of our veterans in and out of the VA

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— Frank J. Mahr, Moon Township, Pa.

On minimum wage

The debate about an increased minimum wage (Big Issues, July) always amuses and frustrates me. I have been an instructor of economics since 1964, and it is my observation that congressional proponents almost always come from states or districts where labor unions are strong, and market wages are already above the proposed new minimum wage. The opponents are almost always from southern states where market wages are low because of the low cost of living. It seems that proponents have cost-of-living envy and want to inflict the same misery on states and districts that happen to be more fortunate. They have nothing to lose, and often they outnumber the representatives and senators from the lower cost-of-living states. It's not about higher wages for the working pool. It's envy and a way to get revenge for all the industry that moved from the "Rust Belt" to the southern states.

— Peyton Lingle, Eulonia, Ga.

'Undaunted Advocate'

Praise and medals are insufficient recognition for Maj. Tammy Duckworth's message to Legionnaires (Rapid Fire, July). Her

experience as a wounded combat veteran has an incredible impact for the present generation as well as to the families of those veterans of our past conflicts.

— Lew Fiero, Red Wing, Minn.

'No Amnesty for Illegals'

Thanks to The American Legion for its stand against amnesty for illegal immigrants (Rapid Fire, July). In a time of war, we see U.S. companies moving overseas to avoid taxes, and others hiring foreigners and illegals instead of U.S. citizens. Now, Congress wants to give free benefits and citizenship to tens of millions of illegals. As citizens and veterans, we deserve better treatment by those we elected.

— William Blyshak, Greensboro, N.C.

I believe two changes should be made to your amnesty list. First, we should eliminate all social services, not most. These people are here illegally and are not entitled to anything except a prompt exit. That exit should be paid for by the firms that illegally hire them.

Second, we should impose penalties, not sanctions, against employers. Hiring officials, human-resources managers and CEOs should face jail time tied directly to the number of illegals employed. Employing companies should face fines covering all costs incurred to identify, round up and deport those illegals, plus punitive damages.

— Paul Rolfe, Council Bluffs, Iowa

Eagle Scout of the Year

In July's Rapid Fire is a superb article about a friend of ours,

Welland Burnside of Boy Scout Troop 396. I am thrilled he has been recognized as The American Legion's 2007 Eagle Scout of the Year. You probably don't know the whole story of this fine Eagle Scout.

Welland and his sister formed an organization known as "Animals for Alex" in Hickory, N.C., when a Boy Scout friend of his died from a rare form of cancer. That organization is still active in North Carolina and is headed by Turner and Joyce King, the parents of Alex King. It has donated stuffed animals to police departments, sheriff's departments and fire departments locally and worldwide. Each year, on the anniversary of Alex's burial, folks come from all over the state and lay stuffed animals on Alex's gravesite, all of which are collected and distributed to kids in need by local police departments.

Last year alone, 1,500 stuffed animals were sent to the U.S. Air Force hospital in Balad, Iraq, for distribution to the children there. Many thousands of stuffed animals were distributed to local charities, Head Start programs, VA hospitals and other programs to comfort children in times of domestic violence, fires, auto accidents, stress and other needs. These have made a significant impact on children around the world.

— Walt McBride, Sherrills Ford, N.C.

Correction — In "A Collection of Courage" (August, Rapid Fire), the late Kane M. Funke was incorrectly identified. He was a Marine lance corporal.

THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE WELCOMES YOUR OPINIONS

Include your hometown and a daytime phone number for verification. All letters published are subject to editing.

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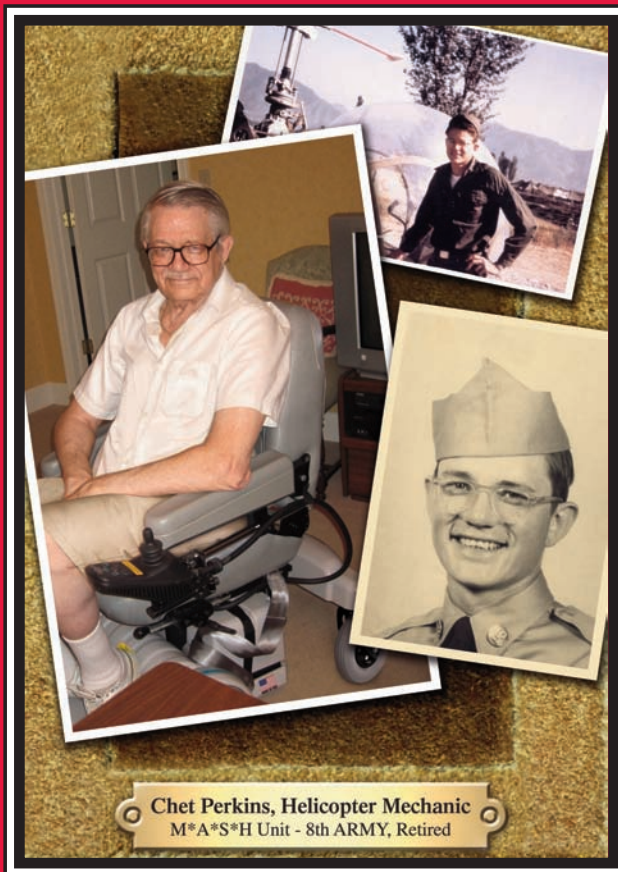
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Our pillars, our priorities

Nearly all we do in The American Legion falls into four distinct categories. The founders of this organization described them as the “four pillars.” I have stressed their importance this year, and I have seen firsthand how thousands of Legionnaires at all levels are guided by them. Nearly 90 years in the making, they are today stronger than ever.

■ **Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation.** In communities of all sizes, our members are proudly reaching out to disabled veterans and recovering troops (See “Heroes to Hometowns,” Page 20), by partnering with hundreds of veteran career fairs and by giving countless hours of volunteer time serving in veteran health-care facilities. On the national level, the Legion’s dedication to veterans health care and other vital legislative issues will once again this year be heard in a September joint hearing of the House and Senate Veterans Affairs committees, thanks to lobbying that flowed from the national to the local and back to the national stages.

■ **National Security.** The American Legion stands by its resolutions on tough national-security issues; foremost is our steadfast support for defeating terrorism in Iraq, Afghanistan or any

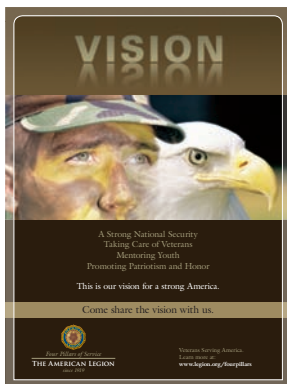
other place on the globe. We do not waffle on this. Our support for the troops extends to the war they are fighting to win. Our position against amnesty for illegal immigrants is similarly clear.

We fortify the pillars whenever care packages are assembled and sent from Legion posts to deployed troops, or when we raise money for Operation Landstuhl for U.S. troops recovering in Germany. We strengthen the pillars through our presence at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

■ **Americanism.** Our members, at the grassroots level, work the phones to inform their elected leaders that flag protection matters to the veterans of this nation. They fight deep-pocketed legal organizations seeking to strip values from our schools, Scouts, parks and veteran memorial sites. And they stand up for God’s place in the Pledge of Allegiance and for the pledge’s place in America’s classrooms. More young people play American Legion Baseball today than ever before because local posts know what a difference the program makes.

■ **Children & Youth.** In Wyoming, the Legion is a primary sponsor in the high-school rodeo program and championship, providing \$250,000 in college scholarships a year. Our organization sponsors day-care centers, tutoring programs, Scout troops and soccer teams. Layers and layers of strength are added to this important pillar every day: Boys State, Boys Nation, Oratorical contests, shooting sports, the hundreds of thousands of dollars granted from the Child Welfare Foundation to help solve the most serious problems challenging young people today, and more.

The four pillars are listed on a poster we printed this year. The poster has a one-word title that says everything about this organization’s origins, its legacy and its future. The word is “vision.” May we never lose sight of what that means or what the pillars stand for.



National Commander
Paul A. Morin

MEMORANDA

CHILDREN & YOUTH

CONFERENCE: All American Legion family members are welcome to attend The American Legion Children & Youth Conference Sept. 21-23 in Indianapolis. Training and presentations are scheduled on the Children’s Miracle Network, Temporary Financial Assistance, youth hero awards and Operation Military Kids. More information is available through department headquarters offices.

COMMANDER’S TESTIMONY:

The American Legion national commander delivers testimony before a joint session of the House and Senate Veterans Affairs committees on Capitol Hill Sept. 20. The hearing will provide the committees with the Legion’s legislative portfolio and budget recommendations. Legionnaires will join the commander in Washington and meet with their congressional delegations.

POST A COMMENT ONLINE:

A fast-growing number of visitors to the revamped American Legion Web site are posting comments and rating articles that appear on it. Learn more about American Legion programs, Legion positions on national and international issues, and membership benefits. www.legion.org

Paul A. Morin

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The STRIVE immigration bill



SUPPORT

Rep. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz.

■ Rep. Flake serves on the House Judiciary Committee's Immigration and Border Security Subcommittee.

I introduced the STRIVE Act with Democratic Rep. Luis Gutierrez of Illinois. Our bill has four major components essential to any serious immigration proposal: border security, interior enforcement, a mechanism for foreign workers to enter the country legally, and no amnesty for illegal immigrants.

The longest section of the bill improves border security. We have to be able to prevent terrorists, drug smugglers and others who mean us harm from entering the country. To that end, the bill increases border personnel, accelerates technology at the border, requires biometric enhancements to identification documents, and includes many other measures designed to end lawlessness at the border.

The bill strengthens interior enforcement by increasing the penalties and expanding the crimes associated with illegal immigration. In addition to stopping illegal immigrants at the border, law-enforcement officials need the resources to pursue those who overstay their visas. The bill also creates a verification system that allows employers to check a new hire's legal status and stiffens penalties on employers who usurp the law. We require sufficient steps to ensure that foreign workers are only filling jobs that cannot be filled by domestic workers.

Finally, immigrants currently in the country illegally must not be given amnesty. Under our bill, those in the country illegally would be forced to pay fines, undergo background checks, meet English and civics requirements, pay back taxes, and, most importantly, go to the back of the line if they wish to adjust their status. The bill also includes a "touchback" provision that would require these illegal immigrants to leave the country and re-enter legally, registering with the US-VISIT program as they do.



OPPOSE

By Rep. Ed Royce, R-Calif.

■ Rep. Royce is the ranking Republican on the House Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Trade.

To me, pardoning lawbreakers and rewarding their crimes with citizenship and jobs is amnesty. Simply because you make illegal immigrants pay fines and sit through English classes does not change anything. Reps. Jeff Flake and Luis Gutierrez are proposing amnesty.

In 1986, the Immigration Reform and Control Act provided legal status for undocumented aliens already in the country. It was

passed with a promise of tougher enforcement, a promise never realized. The law required illegal immigrants to wait, pay a fine and learn English. Sound familiar? It should. "Black's Law Dictionary" categorizes the 1986 law as an amnesty.

We are again promised "tough enforcement." But the bill's provisions are mostly toothless authorizations, thrown together with directions to the Department of Homeland Security to implement laws it should already be enforcing.

What Flake and Gutierrez don't discuss is the cost. The Heritage Foundation released a report titled "The Fiscal Cost of Low-Skill Households to the U.S. Taxpayer," by Robert Rector, which showed how a new guest-worker program would cost \$7.4 billion. A general amnesty – or if you prefer, changing the status of illegal to legal – would cost \$54.4 billion a year.

We have tough laws on the books, but they are not enforced. We have an under-funded, overwhelmed U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service that would be unable to handle the huge number of illegal immigrants the guest-worker proposals would bring in. And we have a Border Patrol under siege by coyotes, criminal gangs, drug smugglers and, yes, even terrorists.

We must approach this issue from the national security standpoint and start by fixing our immigration system first.

THE HEART OF THE ISSUE

Rep. Jeff Flake says his STRIVE Act is serious and comprehensive immigration reform.

Rep. Ed Royce calls it amnesty.

CONTACT YOUR LEADERS

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Failing Grades

*Radicalism is no longer taught only in college;
many younger students are getting a head start.*

BY ALAN W. DOWD

Schools traditionally emphasized the “three Rs” – reading, ’riting and ’rithmetic. Recently a “fourth R” seems to have entered the American schoolhouse: radicalism.

“When you go into a class where you’re supposed to learn about government or geography,” high-school junior Sean Allen says, “you expect to learn what the truth is.” He found out last year that some teachers don’t share his expectation. An Accelerated World Geography class at Overland High School in suburban Denver featured diatribes against the United States, capitalism and President Bush. His frustration over anti-American classroom rhetoric thrust him into a national debate over the limits of academic freedom.

“Sean had told me the teacher was pretty radical,” his father, Jeff Allen, recalls.

How radical? The teacher, Jay Bennish, used a geography class to declare capitalism “an economic system at odds with humanity.” He called the United States “the most violent nation on earth.” He said Bush’s 2006 State of the Union address “sounds a lot like the things that Adolf Hitler used to say.”

Remember, these comments came in a geography class for 10th graders.

Sean’s dad couldn’t believe what his son was reporting. Sean started recording lectures to help in note-taking. When he played Bennish’s rant for his father, the elder Allen called the school principal to let her know what was going on in the classroom.

Almost a week later, still awaiting a response, Allen sent syndicated columnist Walter Williams an e-mail detailing the situation. “I didn’t think, unless I had the backing of someone like a Walter Williams, that the school would take any action,” Allen says.

Williams wrote a column on the brewing controversy. Then a local radio station aired the recording and interviewed Sean, as did Fox News Channel. Along the way, Bennish was suspended but was later reinstated. “The intent was not to bust the teacher,” Allen explains. “The intent was to get the teacher to teach what he was hired to teach.”

Indeed, children are the very definition of impressionable. That’s one reason why so many people choose education as a vocation, and thank goodness they do. It’s a hard, often thankless job that literally cultivates our most precious resource. But as Sara Dogan of Parents and Students for Academic Freedom (PSAF) observes, “Many teachers take

advantage of their positions of authority. Their role is to educate, not indoctrinate.”

Sean says 90 percent of the student body supported him, but he did receive threats and felt compelled to enroll in a different school. He also received hundreds of e-mails from all across the country – even from soldiers in Iraq. “Sean has gotten a lot of support from our troops,” his father says. “One soldier even sent him a flag and a letter of appreciation. That makes it all worth it.”

Sean, who later returned to Overland, hopes his ordeal shows parents and students that the biased brand of education common at U.S. universities and colleges is making its way into the earlier grades. “It’s a huge problem in high school,” Sean says. “By the time you’re in college, you’re sort of numb to it, or you just go along with it.”

The New Math. David Horowitz, one of the founders of the so-called New Left that helped radicalize college campuses in the 1960s, agrees. “The kids are already brainwashed by the time they get to college,” he says. Horowitz is now one of the most ardent critics of the far left, credited with launching a family of organizations that promote academic freedom and serve as watchdogs against political indoctrination in the classroom. One of those organizations is Parents and Students for Academic Freedom. “It is much, much worse at the K-12 level because the kids are so young,” Horowitz says. “It’s unbelievable what they are allowed to do at K-12 schools.”

He points to the Bennis case and also to what he observed firsthand at Pacific Palisades High School in 2005. Working with antiwar groups, the school’s English department planned what Horowitz calls “an indoctrination session for 14- to 18-year-olds.” Those attending the program, which took place during school hours, were treated to vitriolic lessons like: Iraq was a war for oil; the war on terror was caused by America’s support for Israel; and U.S. troops have killed 100,000 innocent Iraqis. Horowitz also attended, due to a mistake by the organizers. He provided balance, and facts, to the program. He also listened to students, who reported that some teachers intimidated them and kicked them out of class when they mentioned Saddam Hussein’s brutal record.

Those who dismiss episodes like these as isolated cases “are completely wrong,” Horowitz says. He cites the trend within schools of education – the places that teach teachers – to promote the “social-justice movement,” which in his view is “a movement to indoctrinate students in our K-12 schools.”

As evidence, PSAF has put together a survey of the most prominent texts used in U.S. schools of education. One openly concludes that teachers “cannot hide behind notions of neutrality or objectivity.” Another, geared to grade-school math teachers, includes a lesson plan condemning U.S. military action against the Taliban.

A Bill Too Far? PSAF is helping parents and policymakers expose and reverse such “politicization in the American school system” by promoting a student bill of rights. The Arizona legislature, for example, has considered a controversial bill to protect students and prohibit “any instructor in a public K-12 or postsecondary institution while in the instructor’s official capacity from endorsing, supporting or opposing any political candidate or office, legislation, litigation or court action or advocating one side of a social, political or cultural issue that is a matter of partisan controversy.” The bill’s proposed penalties include revocation of teaching certification and up to a \$500 fine.

Horowitz opposes the bill’s college-related elements. “I have never advocated legislation that would monitor or restrict what university instructors say in their classrooms,” he recently wrote. But he supports the K-12 elements.

The distinction makes sense. Most K-12 students, as Dogan observes, “don’t have the maturity of college students to protest what is happening or even to tell their parents.”

Arizona lawmakers aren’t the only ones wading into controversial education issues. Early this year, New Jersey lawmakers passed a measure that would have allowed schools to stop observing and/or teaching about Veterans Day and Memorial Day. New Jersey Legionnaires and other veterans groups called on Gov. Jon Corzine to veto the bill, which he did. “Given the past sacrifices of our veterans and the sacrifices now being made by those serving in the armed forces, especially the sacrifices of those who gave their lives in service to their country,” Corzine said in his veto message, “it is imperative that New Jersey schoolchildren be reminded of those valiant men and women who have demonstrated their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.”

It would appear that teachers and administrators are the ones who need to be reminded about patriotism, sacrifice and service. One former teacher reports that many public schools in Los Angeles have given up on the Pledge of Allegiance. “Teachers openly opposed reciting the pledge,”



Sean Allen, a Colorado high-school student, ignited a national furor about classroom indoctrination after taping his geography teacher's anti-American rants. AP/Susan Walsh

says Ari Kaufman, who taught in Los Angeles public schools from 2001 to 2005. "I even recall elementary-school teachers having kids make 'No War in Iraq' posters." Kaufman ultimately lost the energy to keep teaching. "I got along with the parents and loved the kids. But the radicalized teachers and teachers unions disenchanted me."

In San Francisco, the board of education voted to end the Junior ROTC program in late 2006. Even though the program is completely voluntary, promotes community service and keeps some 1,600 kids off the streets, it will be phased out. Likewise, the JROTC program at Los Angeles' Roosevelt High is under assault from an alliance of students and agenda-minded teachers, contributing to a 43-percent drop in the number of cadets. *The Los Angeles Times* reports that some teachers "are openly hostile toward JROTC."

The San Mateo Union High School District in California has been mulling ways to limit military-recruiter access to students. The Madison Metropolitan School District in Wisconsin has already done so. The Garfield High School PTA in Seattle started the anti-recruiting trend in 2005, when it declared that "public schools are not a place for military recruiters." But the law says otherwise. The No Child Left Behind Act, which passed Congress with broad bipartisan support in 2002, directs high schools to "provide military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as is provided ... to post-secondary educational institutions or to prospective employers."

Teachers at Frank Allis Elementary School in Madison, Wis., gave their third-graders an assignment to write antiwar letters to the president,

members of Congress and other students. At La Escuela Fratney, a bilingual public school in Milwaukee, fifth-grade teacher Bob Peterson touted the benefits of leading his students in "The Pledge of Resistance" and using antiwar folk songs in the classroom. "Wake up! The children are dying, the children of Iraq!" are in the lyrics of one song. Among the other titles he recommends: "Bombs over Baghdad," "The Price of Oil" and "Bomb Da World." It is a class for 10-year-olds.

A group calling itself "Educators to Stop the War" convenes conferences where teachers conduct workshops on topics such as "Art to Stop the War," "Blood for Oil? Teaching about Economics-Based War, Grades 7-12" and "Creating a Student Antiwar Movement." One conference in New York City hosted 750 kindergarten-to-college educators.

Standing Up. Teachers aren't the only ones pushing agendas in the classroom. This year at Tucson Accelerated High School, a public charter school, the student council voted to end the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. In response, junior Sam Lucero and his younger brother, Robert, led a protest. "We took flags to school and sang the National Anthem and said the Pledge of Allegiance," Sam explains. "Most of the kids said it was a waste of time. But I'm an American, and there are people fighting for that flag. The least we can do is stand up and say the pledge."

Two of his siblings are deployed in Iraq. His oldest brother, Marine Lance Cpl. Joshua Lucero, was killed in 2004 in Iraq. "He didn't die for nothing," Sam says. "He fought for the flag. It symbolizes hope and freedom."

Sam plans to follow in his brother's footsteps and enlist in the Marines after graduation. "I want to fight for our country," he says with pride, having won his battle for the flag. The student council reversed its decision. Lawyers from the Alliance Defense Fund reminded the school that "prohibiting the recitation of the pledge violates both Arizona statutory law and the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution."

Students like Sam Lucero and Sean Allen, who unafraid to speak out, have successfully spun the flipside of academic freedom – the freedom for a young person to receive a fair and balanced education in an American classroom taught from daily lesson plans rather than political agendas. 🌿

Alan W. Dowd, a senior fellow at the Sagamore Institute, is a contributing editor to The American Legion Magazine.

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Ambushed by support

BY HELEN C. READ

Late in November 2005, the boxes began to arrive in Iraq. Each was addressed to a different U.S. soldier serving in the 2nd Platoon of Alpha Company, 101st Airborne Division. With uncertainty, the 16 platoon members looked at the return addresses, all the same, and questioned one another. Few of them had ever heard of the Midwestern town on the address label, and only their lieutenant knew of the plan that had been executed.

I teach at a large public high school in that Midwestern town and have known the lieutenant for about eight years. This was his second overseas tour of duty but the first in a combat area. I

mentioned his deployment to some of my co-workers, and ideas were soon flowing about how to involve our students in his experiences. Within a few weeks, a plan had formed, one that would target the soldiers while teaching deeper lessons of kindness and support to young suburban teens.

The mission: Our school would adopt the entire platoon and send packages, letters, photos and notes to the soldiers, individually, for the entire year of their deployment.

On that November day, halfway around the world, the first shipment of mail arrived unannounced. Because of the number and weight of the packages, a special Humvee transport was loaded full and dispatched to the area of our platoon's assignment.

Throughout the school year, and into the summer, our students came to class laden with bags of treats for their soldiers. Cards and letters were signed, posters were made, and 6-foot scrolls of well wishes were authored – not just in one class but in 30 classes throughout the school. The boxes often contained personal expressions from the kids, like the book with a personal photo and message on each page or the box in which all the items were individually wrapped for the holidays.



Soldiers in Iraq open care boxes sent to them from an Illinois high-school class that literally took over a project to send support to the war zone.

Each class devised unique and creative ways to express support. Contributing their own money to cover the cost of postage, the students purchased, packaged and posted the things that they would miss the most if they were so far from home. Though no official measurement of cumulative weight was recorded, hundreds of pounds of food and personal items, clothing, games, toys, books and other things considered essential by American teenagers were sent directly to these soldiers they had never met.

Surprised, and perhaps incredulous, the soldiers wondered about the students whose unexpected support

came in large boxes that first day. They shared among themselves the written expressions of support and hung them up on a wall in their work hut. That wall of words continued to grow throughout the year. As more boxes regularly arrived, the soldiers found themselves unable to consume all the items inside. Eventually, they constructed shelves in the hut for the extra items. Word spread. Soldiers from other units came to read the growing wall of student letters and take some of the excess.

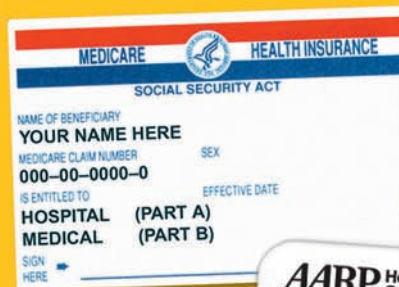
Return correspondence was not expected, but occasional letters from Iraq were received with great excitement in our classrooms.

Just short of a year after their deployment, our platoon returned safely to U.S. soil. The school year began again, and the students were soon involved in their new studies.

As I look back, the mission was accomplished. Our soldiers received caring support while deployed in Iraq, and our students learned the value of reaching out beyond their own immediate world. 🌿

Helen C. Read teaches art at Wheaton North High School in Wheaton, Ill.

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*Juliette Cubanski, Molly Voris, Michelle Kitchman, Tricia Neuman, Lisa Potetz, & The Kaiser Family Foundation, *Medicare Chartbook*, Third Edition, Summer 2005. <<http://www.kff.org/medicare/7284.cfm>>, (December 6, 2006), p. 32. This is a Solicitation of Insurance.

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HEROES TO

Legionnaires and wounded soldiers find each other on a two-way street leading home.

BY JAMES V. CARROLL
AND STEVE BROOKS

The H2H Connection

The American Legion's Heroes to Hometowns program establishes a support network and coordinates resources for severely injured servicemembers returning home from war. While many of the returning troops are directed to the H2H office in the Pentagon or to the nearby Military Severely Injured Center, others who qualify for help are encouraged to contact the office directly.

(703) 908-6250

**heroestohometowns@
legion.org**

Forms to request assistance are available online.

www.legion.org

"When They Come Home" brochures, which provide Legion posts with useful information about how to develop their own H2H programs, including contact information, are available at online. **www.legion.org** Click on "promotional materials" under the Heroes to Hometowns hot link.

NO GENERALIZATION CAN BE MADE about today's severely wounded soldier or newly disabled combat veteran. He could be blind. He could be a she. She might suffer from any combination of medical conditions caused by a split-second, soul-jarring bomb blast – traumatic brain injury, burns, a missing arm or leg, the relentless nightmare of post-traumatic stress disorder – the collective phenomenon known as "polytrauma." He may doubt if he'll ever be able to get up in the morning, put on a smile and go to work at a gas station or a hardware store or an insurance agency, after all he's seen in Iraq. There might be kids at home. There might be creditors on the phone. Perhaps all he wants or needs, in return for the part of his life he left on the battlefield, is a welcome-home dinner, a ride to the VA clinic or someone to acknowledge his medals. He might be 47. She might be 20.

One common thread: they are not the same person who left home for basic training, and they're never going to be that person again. Each severely wounded troop – about 5,000 nationwide and growing – carries a unique set of medical, economic and emotional baggage into an uncertain future. That is why in 2006 the Department of Defense looked to The American Legion and its nearly 15,000 local posts to help returning wounded servicemembers adjust to their new lives.

The American Legion-DoD collaboration is called Heroes to Hometowns. It takes many forms, flowing through the Pentagon and the Military Severely Injured Center in Arlington, Va., where discharging wounded troops and their families can connect with Legionnaires in communities all over the country.

"There's definitely a need," says Roger Webster, immediate past commander of the Department of Michigan, who made Heroes to Hometowns the marquee project of his leadership year. "Too many people fall by the wayside when they get discharged. Unless they know all of the programs that are out there for them, they get left out hanging on their own."

To the wounded soldier, there's comfort in receiving support from a veteran. "It's no fun getting blown up and all that, but it's easier to deal with it when you know people can appreciate what you went through," says Army Spc. Kenneth D. Bosarge of Grand Bay, Ala., who lost sight in one eye, hearing in one ear and suffered severe nerve damage after a roadside-bomb attack in 2005 in Iraq.

"It's the least we can do for this young man," Fowl River, Ala., Post 250 Commander Charles Beech said after helping arrange welcome ceremonies and a medals presentation for Bosarge. "Heroes to Hometowns was developed to help local communities assist severely wounded military personnel, help with things like finding a job, educational opportunities, child care, transportation, spiritual and financial support and other activities ... It's a homecoming."

HOMETOWNS



Alroy Billman of Window Rock, Ariz., goes through rehabilitation exercises after losing his right arm in a roadside-bomb attack in Iraq. He is one of many severely wounded soldiers nationwide who have received help from The American Legion-DoD Heroes to Hometowns program and from dedicated volunteers like Sunny Farrand, background.

Sandy Huffaker, Jr.

SIXTY-THREE-YEAR-OLD Richard “Sunny” Farrand knows what it means to be a veteran in trouble. “Been there, done that,” says the former airman who pulled himself up from the bed of a homeless shelter a decade ago and today drives the streets of San Diego in an old white pickup, glued to his cell phone, trying to keep today’s newly discharged veterans from falling through the same cracks.

Between 1995 and 1997, Farrand went from resident to coordinator of La Mesa United Methodist Church homeless shelter. He later joined The American Legion and found his calling with Heroes to Hometowns. “As soon as I saw the article in *The American Legion Magazine* I dropped a dime to the H2H office in the Pentagon and asked to help,” Farrand says. “I wasn’t sure what I could do. I’m not sure they knew what I could do. It was a learning thing for all of us.”

Since then, Farrand has assisted more than 100 troops, veterans and families. He learns about

them through counselor advocates at Camp Pendleton, the Naval Hospital at Balboa, or Palo Alto, from the department adjutant, national headquarters, or by word of mouth.

“Sometimes it’s little things, like money for diapers,” the unpaid volunteer explains. “Sometimes it’s organizing a welcome-home celebration or coordinating with area organizations to find housing, furniture and other household supplies. Vehicles. Clothing. Whatever it takes, we find it.”

In the last year alone, Farrand helped a wounded Marine get furniture so he could move into base housing. He also arranged for 20 families to receive holiday gift cards, worked with an auto-repair shop to provide free labor on the vehicles of severely injured servicemembers and helped Marines assist an injured National Guardsman in his effort to disability-modify his van and make necessary changes to his home and furniture.

“Some months my phone bill is close to \$300, and I don’t even want to talk about gasoline,”





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Farrand says. Community donations help cover his costs. Earlier this year, DoD presented him with a certificate of recognition, and House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Bob Filner, D-Calif., personally thanked him for his service.

“Sunny Farrand is a true advocate of the wounded warrior,” says Scott Sundsvold, the Legion’s Heroes to Hometowns national coordinator. “From the first days of the Heroes to Hometowns program, he has raised awareness and rallied resources.”

WHEN SPRING LAKE TOWNSHIP, MICH., residents Terry and Brenda Griffin were informed that their son, Army Pvt. Tony Griffin, had been severely injured by a roadside bomb near Hawijah, Iraq, in September 2006, they did what any parent would do: they rushed to his side.



Brenda and Terry Griffin were astounded by the help they received through Heroes to Hometowns. Legionnaire Bill Kaufman, right, sees a Vietnam-era lesson in such advocacy. Steve Brooks

Pvt. Griffin was in the gun turret when his Humvee was hit. Two of his crewmembers were killed. When the turret collapsed on top of him, Griffin lost a finger, suffered nerve damage on his



Legion representative eases transition for those recovering at Walter Reed.

U.S. MARINE CORPS COMBAT VETERAN Jerry Johnson knows the stress of medical discharge, a military career cut short and the bureaucratic gray areas one must traverse to make the transition from soldier to veteran. The American Legion’s on-base service officer at

Walter Reed Army Medical Center spent more than 13 years in uniform before a lung collapse and asthma led to a medical discharge. “I fought to stay in,” he says. But he was out.

The Columbus, Ind., native was astonished to find little guidance during his own transition out of the military and decided to make a career of veterans-benefits advocacy. He used the GI Bill to earn a degree in sociology from Indiana University in 2003 and went to work for The American Legion Department of Indiana where he honed his new profession for four years. Last spring, after national controversy over conditions of a Walter Reed Army Medical Center outpatient facility, The American Legion hired Johnson to work fulltime in transition assistance at Walter Reed, following a unique memorandum of understanding with DoD.

Johnson recently spoke with *The American Legion Magazine*.

Q: *What drew you to the Walter Reed assignment?*

A: I had heard that the servicemembers are going through a lot of the same things I did. They have a great support system here, but a lot of them are being under-rated in terms of their benefits. I give them representation, assist them to get the rating they deserve and help them file initial claims with VA. A lot of these young men and women don’t realize what they are eligible for.

Q: *What medical conditions are most prominent?*

A: The majority of the injuries here deal with amputations, mainly because of the use of improvised explosive devices in Iraq. The second most common injury has to be the TBIs – traumatic

left hand and sustained a leg wound so wide it couldn't be stapled shut without ripping back open. He's undergone over a dozen surgeries. After nearly a year at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, he wants to go home soon. When he does, local Legionnaires are ready and waiting.

Griffin's parents, both Air Force veterans, were not thinking about missed paychecks while attending to their son at Walter Reed. "When we got the call, I said, 'We've got to go,'" Brenda Griffin said. "I had to be with my son. Our employers were supportive, but you still don't get paid. We tried to keep up with the bills – especially the ones necessary for Tony – but we got behind."

The Griffins fell more than \$2,700 behind on their mortgage payments when American Legion

Post 28 in Grand Haven, Mich., stepped up. Post service officer Jim Walton – regional point of contact for Heroes to Hometowns – found out about the Griffin situation and contacted Department of Michigan H2H Chairman Eddie Brown. With the wheels in motion, Walton and Post 28 were able to present a check to catch them back up. "We want to do everything we can to help our servicemembers transition back to a normal life – or at least as normal as possible," Walton says.

Bill Kaufman, immediate past commander of Post 28, says the program is built on lessons from the past. "Look at how Vietnam War veterans were treated when they came home and how many are dealing with PTSD and homelessness. If we can take care of our guys coming home now, we can avoid future generations going through

brain injury. The next most common disorder has to be post-traumatic stress disorder. Several of these soldiers are experiencing it. At the very least, it is now being recognized. Years ago, people didn't even begin to know how to deal with it.

Q: *Your position was created after last winter's media exposure of conditions in Building 18. How does your job connect with that exposure?*

A: I think the media exposure shined light on different areas that needed to be addressed. The command here is dedicated to fixing them and giving the soldiers a better quality of life.

Q: *Was it an isolated incident?*

A: Building 18 was closed down before I started here. A lot of people don't realize that the building actually is not on the base itself. It's off post and across the street. I have talked with some soldiers who stayed there, and they all agree that the conditions there were terrible. Rats, roaches, mold, water leaks, plumbing problems were common. Many of them don't blame the Army, or the command. They seem to feel the fault lies with the civilian contractors. A work order would be put in, and it would take several days before anyone would respond to it. I think the Army should hold these people more accountable.

As a whole, Walter Reed is one of the finest military medical facilities you will ever see. There is a definite need for it, and I predict there will be a need for it for several years to come. When you visit the actual hospital, the Malone House, Fisher House or Abrams Hall where the soldiers and their families stay, you see how nice the facilities are.

They are modern, well-designed, and well-equipped. The people in charge of these facilities take pride in the services they are providing.

Q: *How does your position dovetail with the Heroes to Hometowns program?*

A: Most of these men and women are going to need a leg up when they get home. Many people don't realize it, but when you leave the military where everything has been done to help you, and go home, it can be a traumatic experience. They go from having all of the support in the world at their fingertips to just being dropped off and at the mercy of the VA and other bureaucracies. They need real answers, real help now, not six to nine months from now. If local posts and communities join together to support these people, it would be fantastic.

Q: *How well is the need for transition-assistance services being met now at Walter Reed?*

A: The need is greater than a lot of people realize. Unfortunately, many of the soldiers themselves don't realize how much they need it. We have a good crew here for the transition process, but still more could be done. We need support from employers. We need companies and individuals from the soldiers' hometowns and states to help. It may be something as simple as building a wheelchair ramp, or finding a babysitter. When these people leave the service, they are going to be faced with everyday problems most of us don't think about. They're going to be busy rebuilding their lives.

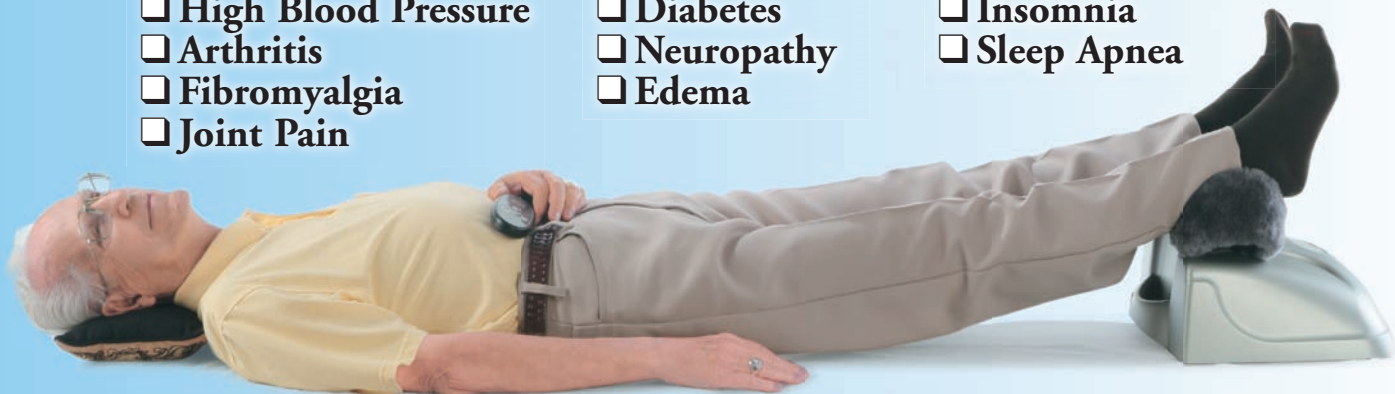
Interview: Jeff Stoffer

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As a Chiropractor, I would like to say that the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ enables people to benefit themselves at home. It is a valuable asset in moving lymph fluid, oxygenating the blood, increasing immune system function, maintaining mobility in the spine, and additionally freeing up a spine that has become stiff and arthritic. —*Garry Gorsuch, D.C.*

The ad I saw almost sounded "too good to be true". With your no risk money back guarantee I figured I had nothing to lose so I purchased the machine... and boy, am I glad I did! I am 75 years old and suffer from sciatica, which makes my back and legs tighten up and causes numbness. I was taking 8-10 Aleve™ every day. After using the machine for only 4 minutes, I noticed my lower back loosening up. Since I have been using the machine I haven't taken any pain pills and have been pain free. My sciatica is not giving me problems anymore and my body stays loosened up. I have also had a snoring problem for quite some time, however, since using the machine my snoring has subsided. My wife is so excited! I cannot tell you how much this machine has turned my life around. —*C. Cummings*

After having a stroke, I could no longer exercise the way I used to. As a result, I developed edema. A friend of mine introduced me to the Exerciser 2000 Elite™. I loved it and I purchased one for myself. After using the machine daily for a few weeks, my symptoms of edema were completely gone. I now use the machine twice a day for 16 minutes each time on speed 3. What a wonderful way to exercise. —*Robert M.*

I love using the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ after my morning workout. It is an excellent way to cool down and it helps to start my day off right. —*Deanna C., Kansas*

I have had constipation problems for over 25 years. Since I have been using the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ I have been regular every day and have begun to lose weight. This is truly a blessing and is so easy to use. —*Jeannie*

I am in my late 80's and have diabetes. The first thing I noticed when I started using my machine was that my feet were warm when I went to bed. They were always ice cold before. Because one of my problems is poor circulation, I use the machine three times a day for 10 minutes each; in the morning, late afternoon and just before bed. I almost forgot to mention that I have not been able to lift my arms above my head. Now I can do it. You think that's no big deal until you can't do it anymore. —*Ralph K.*

My husband and I have been into natural products all of our lives but nothing has ever affected us like the Exerciser 2000 Elite™. My husband is 72 and delivers flowers. He carries 5 gallon buckets of water. Since using the machine, his back hasn't hurt him at all. My hips would hurt if I stood too long and I would get weak and have to sit down. Now I can walk and sit as long as I want. I don't take pain medication anymore. In the morning, when I get out of bed I'm not stiff anymore. At 65, wow, this is great! Thank you for offering such a great machine. We are going to tell everyone we know about it. —*Cheryl J.*

I had suffered with sleep apnea for many years and had been taking drugs for it. I was told I would have to use a breathing apparatus. In the meantime, I was introduced to the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ and decided to purchase one. Within two weeks, I was sleeping more deeply and restfully than ever before. —*David B.*

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Soldier awed by Legion welcome.

A RMY STAFF SGT. CHRIS BAIN was wounded on April 8, 2004, when insurgents attacked just as the convoy he commanded was rolling out. A mortar explosion mangled his left hand, leaving him with the ability to do little else but make a fist. A



Chris Bain vows to keep fighting for his fellow veterans. Pamela A. Suchy

bullet pierced his right elbow and left him with nerve damage and a permanently numb right hand. The Williamsport, Pa., resident is one of many U.S. servicemembers who received support through Heroes to Hometowns. He recently spoke with *The American Legion Magazine*:

Q: Describe your homecoming last winter.

A: There were two or three Patriot Guard riders who showed up to escort me, and there also was a police escort, all the way from my home to American Legion Post 1. I had the door opened for me, and everyone was cheering for me. They had dinner for my wife and I. Everyone treated us with the utmost respect. It was phenomenal.

Q: How did that evening make you feel?

A: Like I was the President of the United States, and my wife was the first lady. And all I ever did was put my right hand up 14 years ago and said I'd serve my country. Walking into that Legion hall, seeing all of those people who also served their country and feeling like I was a part of that community, it just felt amazing.

Q: What's the next step in your life?

A: It's hard to say, now that I am retired and only 36 years old. I've got Legionnaires coming up to me and telling I can make whatever I want out of life. I've made up my mind that I'm going to run for office in 2008. I'm going to continue fighting for my brothers and sisters coming home from the war. I can't serve in uniform, but I can serve in a suit and tie. It's still my job to step up and make a difference.

similar emotional situations 10 years from now. It will be better for our country."

"IT'S LIKE EVERY OTHER GUY TELLS YOU," says Bosarge, the Army specialist from Alabama who lay bloodied and broken by the side of a road in western Iraq on Easter Sunday 2005. "You hear a loud boom and then you start looking to see if you have all your parts. I looked and saw that my arm was blown open. Blood was spurting from my head. I couldn't see out of my right eye, and my helmet was gone."



Kenneth Bosarge, left, was given a medals-presentation ceremony arranged by Alabama Post 250 Commander Charles Beech.

Bosarge was manning a machine gun in a convoy through al Anbar Province when an IED wounded him and four others. He followed a well-traveled route out of theater: first a field hospital, then a larger facility in Balad, then Landstuhl, Germany, before arriving at Walter Reed. His eye, ear, back and arms required 11 surgeries.

In the flurry of saving his life, the soldier's medals were overlooked. "It's not something that I really gave a lot of thought to, but, well you know ..." the 1999 high-school graduate said.

Fowl River, Ala., American Legion Post 250 learned through Heroes to Hometowns that Bosarge was coming home soon, and Commander Charles Beech began organizing a ceremony where the soldier was presented the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star. "It meant a lot to me to be presented my medals in front of my family and friends," says Bosarge, who with strong family support at home needed little else from the program. "It made me feel really proud that so many people took time out of their busy lives to welcome me home."

MANEUVERING HIS ARMORED HUMVEE along the deadly, dusty roads of Iraq, 27-year-old Alroy Billiman believed he had a charmed life. Every vehicle – every member in his platoon – had endured an IED attack during their seven months in Iraq. Everyone, that is, except him.

Before deploying to Ramadi, Billiman's father gave his Navajo son a green bag filled with soil from sacred mountains on tribal land. Billiman believed in its power, and others took notice. "They all wanted to ride with me."

On Nov. 9, 2006, he traveled for the first time

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without it. The bag had gone missing a couple of days earlier. Everything soon changed for the young man from Window Rock, Ariz. “I saw a bump in the road up ahead, and I braced myself. All of a sudden, there was a big explosion, and shrapnel came up through the floor and cut my arm off. The pain was terrible.”

Field hospital. Landstuhl. Walter Reed. Surgeries.

By Thanksgiving, he was transferred to San Diego for rehabilitation. Navy housing was provided for Billiman, his wife Katara, and their baby daughter, Altaevyah, but the family had little or no furniture.

“All our stuff was back home,” Billiman says. “We didn’t know what we were going to do until a counselor advocate got in touch with Sunny (Farrand) from The American Legion. He got busy and made arrangements with a lot of other folks to get a crib for our baby and a bed for my wife and me. Sunny also was able to get some diapers and some gift cards for food and other stuff. Sunny even helped us put together the baby crib.

“It made me feel really good that people cared about me and my family when we needed a little help. We were far away from home and didn’t know anyone.”

IN 2006, DURING HIS YEAR as national commander, Thomas L. Bock identified the problem after meeting with Army and Navy authorities. “There was a lot of concern,” Bock says. “We started to see a hole somewhere between DoD and VA. Then we started hearing horror stories from guys who came home and didn’t have anyone to turn to. It was a natural fit for the Legion.”

But it was – and still is – a complicated fit. “Just because we know where a severely wounded soldier is doesn’t mean he wants help,” Sundsvold says. “It is a delicate matter sometimes. Sometimes a veteran or family needs to be convinced this isn’t a membership drive, that our members pay their dues for opportunities to perform service like this. It takes people skills. The best person to make initial contact is often the post chaplain.”

Patient privacy laws and DoD security restrictions make access to the names of severely wounded servicemembers difficult. Information often comes directly from American Legion members who hear about a wounded soldier. Families themselves also contact the H2H national office, department headquarters or local posts.

“A lot of times the local post is taking the program and running with it,” says Webster of Michigan. “I like the fact we’re doing this for people in our own state. Sometimes when you



Sunny Farrand, once a homeless veteran, now works tirelessly to support wounded troops in southern California. Sandy Huffaker, Jr.

donate money, you never really know where it goes. People donate money or items for Heroes to Hometowns and see exactly where it’s going.”

Transition assistance, particularly for the severely wounded, remains a work in progress for the federal government and service organizations. “The military community is still trying to figure out how to react to all this,” Sundsvold says. “The Legion is deeply engaged in developing with their plan.”

Part of the plan is the placement of 100 new VA transition patient advocates across the country. Even that effort can’t reach everyone in need. “Where we can come in is by filling in gaps, by creating our own seamless transition process,” Sundsvold says.

“Posts, districts, departments – individual members – all have an obligation to reach out to these severely wounded young men and women and provide help when and where it’s needed,” American Legion National Commander Paul A. Morin explains. “A local Hero Transition Team can be started at any post. And every post needs an H2H coordinator.”

Bock says communication is vital. “We need to shout it from the rooftops. Awareness is most important. Get on the TV, radio, newspapers ... make sure everyone knows about it.”

“This is, by definition, a local program,” Morin says. “Heroes to Hometowns drives at some of our most important national values. It is a privilege for Legionnaires to live up to those time-honored values and pull through for young servicemembers who face years of uncertainty because of the sacrifices they made in uniform. These men and women deserve full support when they come home. They deserve to be treated like heroes.” 🌿

Steve Brooks is senior editor and James V. Carroll is assistant editor of The American Legion Magazine.

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★ THE WAR ★

THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

Not since the war itself has interest in World War II ever been greater.

Sixty-two years have passed since the Allies triumphed over the Axis powers. In that time, thousands of books – fiction and nonfiction – have been written about the war. Hundreds of documentaries and movies have been made, and millions of dollars have been raised and spent to build memorials honoring those who fought and died.

There's literally no end to the topic on the Internet. Countless Web sites cover everything from A-bombs to Zero fighter planes. Even the video-game industry has a separate World War II genre, releasing dozens of titles a year, sending another generation through the great battles that collectively altered the course of human civilization.

World War II is regarded as the war that changed the world. It transformed the United States into a global superpower and set the stage for a showdown between free nations and those gripped by oppressive regimes. It redrew the boundaries of nations and created unprecedented economic and educational opportunities for returning U.S. servicemembers, sparking the baby boom and establishing the American middle class. In a profound way, it invented suburbia. The war can

also lay claim to having ushered more women than ever into the workforce. It hastened the civil-rights movement. It inspired advances in technology, medicine and mass communication. The war changed everything and everyone.

Last November, the National World War II Museum in New Orleans staged a massive event that brought together for the first time veterans, historians, authors, scholars and interested members of the general public to discuss World War II and its impact. The diverse cast of speakers included former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, commentator Andy Rooney, historian Victor Davis Hanson, and authors James Bradley and Sir Max Hastings. Delayed a year because of heavy damage to the city by Hurricane



Katrina, the inaugural International Conference on World War II was one of the largest and most significant gatherings of its kind on record.

The week's most insightful and moving presentations, however, were delivered in Memory Hall, where rotating panels of World War II participants shared their personal stories of bravery, loss, faith and commitment to victory. *The American Legion Magazine* was there to talk with them. Following are just some of their stories.

'GOD SAVED ME TO BE THEIR SPOKESMAN'

Wounded five times at Omaha Beach, D-Day survivor Harold Baumgarten will never forget those who didn't make it.

I landed on Dog Green Sector with the 1st Battalion of the 116th Regiment, 29th Division, on the beach from "Saving Private Ryan" and "The Longest Day." The weather was a big enemy for us. We were supposed to land with 720 men in four companies. Two got lost and landed to the east, and two companies – mine and another – landed directly where we were supposed to land. One lost three boats. The other lost two. By the time we got there, we only had 210 men to fight.

I was the fifth man on the west side of the boat, behind Clarius Riggs of Pennsylvania. He got gunned down on the ramp. I dove in behind him. My helmet was creased in the left side by a bullet. I was standing in neck-deep, bloody water with my rifle over my head. I was 5-foot-10, 185 pounds, on D-Day. Our 5-4 and 5-5 guys went straight to the bottom and drowned. The government was nice enough to give us these special combat jackets made out of green canvas material. I didn't wear that jacket, because that jacket was going to drown me. Instead, as an act of defiance, I drew a large Star of David on the back of my field jacket with "The Bronx, N.Y." written around it.

We had to cross 400 yards of open beach with body parts laying around – horrible sights for a 19-year-old. When we were 120 yards

from the sea wall, machine-gun spray came from the bluff. There was a loud thud on my right front. My rifle vibrated. There was a clean hole in its receiver. There was another thud behind me, to my left. That soldier was gone. I hit the sand. To my right, Pvt. Robert Dittmar of Fairfield, Conn., got shot in the chest, tripped over one of the hedgerows, spun around and was lying on his back, yelling, "I'm hit! Mom! Mother!" I looked over to the left. Sgt. Clarence Roberson of Lynchburg, Va., was staggering by me, with a gaping hole in the left side of his forehead, blond hair streaked with blood. I yelled for him to get down, but the noise on that beach was horrendous.

BY MATT GRILLS

PHOTOS BY BEVIL KNAPP



He knelt down facing the seawall, praying with his rosary beads, and a machine gunner up on the bluff cut him in half. Later on, I killed that machine gunner. We had 85-percent casualties in the first 15 minutes. Two of us survived from my boat team of 30.

I was wounded three times June 6 and two times June 7. Three of my wounds were life-threatening: two in the face, one right through the foot. I'm very fortunate to be alive. My fifth wound came while lying on a stretcher waiting to be evacuated. Snipers shot me in the right knee.

I had teeth and gums laying on my tongue for five days. I had a hole in the roof of my mouth. I had my entire upper jaw gone from the two wounds in the face. It took a long time to get me put back together. I had plastic surgery in November 1944. The reason it lasted that long was I was emaciated. I lost 75 pounds. My foot was infected until January 1945, and I begged them to discharge me so I could go back to New York University to continue my studies. I couldn't walk. I was dragging my left foot. But I promised I would go to VA for further treatment. I went between semesters to get operated on. I've had 22 operations since World War II. The last one was August 2006, a bone graft up in the left side of my mouth. They're still treating me at the Gainesville, Fla., VA.

In 1988, I went back to France. I never mentioned D-Day, never spoke about it. I was a schoolteacher; I never mentioned it to my students. It was a bad dream. But when I looked at these fellows' graves in the American cemetery, I looked up at my wife and said, "These guys can't speak anymore. How are people going to know what they did, the heroism they displayed? I have to be their spokesman. God saved me to be their spokesman." I never stopped speaking about D-Day after that.



THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES

At 6 years old, Dorinda Makanaonalani witnessed the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor from her front yard.

When I grew up, the world was divided: before Dec. 7 and after Dec. 7. It marks your life, your generation.

On that Sunday morning, about 7:30, Mom was in the kitchen getting breakfast. We were used to the sound of military planes flying overhead, but soon we heard what sounded like explosions, and our house started to shake because of how close we were to the harbor. Dad went into the front yard, and I went right after him. Torpedo bombers were coming in at a very low altitude. The canopies were pushed back, the pilots with their goggles looking out, heading for the ships in the harbor.

We got into our car so we could get closer. Trucks were going past with men still pulling on their trousers. I wanted to go back home. I'd left my dog. But military police would not allow us to go back. So we headed into the sugar cane hills. From our perch there we looked down onto the harbor. We could see it burning. My dad was turning the knob on the car radio, trying to hear some kind of information. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon the governor came on, telling us we were now under martial law. We stayed in a hall at a sugar plantation. From 6 at night until 6 in the morning we were not allowed out. There would be no school until February. I carried a child-size gas mask with me in my backpack.

On the 50th anniversary, there was a commemorative program. I actually invited myself to speak because there were no women speaking, no natives of the island, and nobody had a child's story. The response was overwhelming, and I was encouraged to write "Pearl Harbor Child."

Then veterans started coming to me with their stories. One deserved a book of its own, and that was the story of U.S. Marine Richard Fiske, who hated the Japanese. He was on the *West Virginia* as it was sinking. He had looked into the face of one of the bombers and had nightmares for years about it. He met one of the Japanese pilots, Zenji Abe, and they became friends. They saw in each other this desire to heal old war wounds. They visited each other's countries, and on one of the last trips Mr. Abe gave Richard some money. He said, "I want you to buy two red roses, and I want you to take them out to the *Arizona* memorial. One is for America, and one is for Japan, and all who died." And Richard did that once a month for the last 12 years of his life.



'JUST ANOTHER DAY AT THE RACES'

Coast Guard veteran Marvin Perrett landed troops at D-Day, Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

As a young man in New Orleans during the early years of World War II, Marvin Perrett watched the construction of Higgins landing crafts and knew he wanted no part of them. He hoped to man the big guns of a Navy ship, and the day before he turned 18, he tried to join up. Told by recruiters that they had filled their quota, Perrett ended up enlisting in the Coast Guard and by 10 o'clock that night was on his way to St. Augustine, Fla.

After boot camp he was sent to Camp Lejeune, N.C., where he learned he'd be operating – of course – Higgins boats. He would operate them in no fewer than four major battles. Perrett first participated in the little-known D-Day dress rehearsal, Exercise Tiger, where a surprise German attack sank two LSTs and killed some 750 Americans. He went on to land troops at Normandy, southern France, Iwo Jima and Okinawa.



Perrett, 81, died May 7 at his home in New Orleans. In one of his final interviews, he recalled his time as coxswain of Higgins boat PA33-21. A replica of the boat is now displayed inside the National World War II Museum.

What was it like driving a Higgins boat? It would be tantamount to driving a bulldozer in the water with that iron blade down. We were operating, for the most part, in 3-foot seas. And of course the 36-foot boat bounced around in the wind and the waves like a cork in the water. During those 19 or 20 days, all I did was go back and forth, bringing fresh troops in and injured troops out, almost functioning like a taxicab.

Any close calls? Near-misses occurred around me all the time, but I must say that of the 36 men I brought ashore on D-Day, not a single one of them lost their lives from the ship to the beach. And none of the boats in my wave, to my knowledge, received any shrapnel or any fire on the boat itself. We were very fortunate.

Of all the invasions, which was roughest on you? Iwo Jima turned out to be the worst one for me

because it was there I lost my boat on my first trip into the beach. One of the Marines fell in front of the lower ramp, and I backed up to keep from crushing him. The boat sunk out from under me. I hitched a ride with another landing craft and eventually was deposited on the beach. There were guys falling all around us. We'd been taught hand-to-hand combat, but that was not our mission. Our mission was to bring troop ships to shore. I had to fend for myself and my crew, hitchhiking a ride back to our mother ship, the USS *Bayfield*, which was 12 miles out, to get a replacement boat.

During all these battles, did it ever occur to you that you were participating in history? No, it was just another day at the races. You did more or less what was asked of you. It scares the heck out of me today. How'd I manage to make it? How do you explain that you went through five encounters like this and came out without a scratch? You just have to conclude that our enemies were poor shots. I don't know how to explain it, but I just had a feeling: "Whatever this is about, I'm coming back. I don't know about the rest of them, but I'm coming back."

‘THE MOST SEARING EXPERIENCE’

Army nurse Virginia Visser treated the wounded and later saw firsthand the Nazi atrocities at Buchenwald.

Virginia Schuyler had been in the Army just six weeks when she received orders overseas. With other nurses, she traveled by train from Camp Carson, Colo., to join up with the 187th General Hospital in Texas. “We had no idea where we were going, but I was pleased to see we were headed east. I don’t like bugs, and I don’t like heat, so they sent me in the right direction.”



Seasickness plagued Schuyler the entire 12 days to Europe. After landing in Liverpool, England, the nurses had to stay aboard ship until nightfall. “It was the most eerie feeling, because for the first time we realized we were in a war zone,” she says.

Because the hospital wasn’t yet set up, nurses boarded with English families. Every morning Schuyler and her friends

watched the planes come in. Something big was about to happen, but they didn’t know what or when. Then D-Day arrived, and patients with burns and gunshot wounds filled the hospital. It wasn’t until August that Schuyler took a three-day leave, to visit her brother in Norwich after the Red Cross notified her he’d been hit.

Eventually Schuyler met Capt. John Visser, whom she would marry in May 1946. But before that, she served with the 36th General Hospital in Dijon, France, treating German prisoners of war, and the 2nd Evacuation Hospital in Weimar, Germany. While there, a GI working in the transportation office asked her if she wanted to see a concentration camp. Having heard little about them, Schuyler agreed to a tour.

“It was the most searing experience of the war,” she says of Buchenwald. Most survivors had been evacuated, but a few were still there, sleeping on planks that served as beds.

“I think the thing that probably shocked us the most was stepping out from where the crematoriums were and seeing all these bodies stacked out there. Almost instinctively, my friend and I held hands. I don’t know why, but we just needed the comfort of one another.”



JACK LUCAS

“All I cared about was getting to do what I wanted, which was fight for my country.”

Jack Lucas was 14 when he lied about his age to join the Marine Corps in 1942. He was found out but ended up assigned to the 5th Marine Division for the invasion of Iwo Jima, where he threw himself on two Japanese grenades to save his comrades. One was a dud; the other went off and severely wounded him. After extensive rehabilitation, Lucas joined the Army and attained the rank of captain. At age 17, he was the youngest recipient of the Medal of Honor in World War II.

HERSCHEL ‘WOODY’ WILLIAMS

“There is no greater honor than serving your country and protecting it from someone who wants to take away your freedom.”

While serving with the 21st Marines, 3rd Marine Division on Iwo Jima, Williams mounted a pillbox to insert the nozzle of his flamethrower through the air vent, killing the enemy and silencing the gun. On another occasion, he charged enemy riflemen who had attempted to stop him with bayonets and destroyed them with a burst of flame. He received the Medal of Honor on Oct. 5, 1945.

WALT EHLERS

“I think the greatest generation is still coming up.”

On June 9, 1944, near Goville, France, Army Staff Sgt. Walt Ehlers led his squad against a heavily defended enemy stronghold, personally killing four Nazi soldiers who attacked him en route. Then, crawling under heavy machine-gun fire, he took out the gun crew. Though wounded the next day, he refused to be evacuated and returned to lead his squad. He received the Medal of Honor Dec. 14, 1944. Ehlers insists he’s no hero; that’s his older brother Roland, he says, who was killed at Omaha Beach on D-Day.

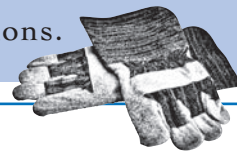


“My company had 186 men, and 28 came home after the war. For 50 years, it was on my mind, but I never talked about it. I still feel guilty that I came home. Survivors usually feel that way. My son and stepsons started asking questions, and I felt obliged then to put it into writing. I sat down four hours a day to write. The first few months were filled with frustration, crying. It was like opening a boil.”

— Lester Tenney, author of “My Hitch in Hell,” an account of his participation in the Bataan Death March and three years in the brutal POW Camp 17



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'I MADE THE BEST OF IT – I HAD TO'

Mary Kawano Fong recalls the shame of thousands of Japanese-American families interned in California.

Mary Kawano Fong was 14 at the time of the Pearl Harbor attack. She lived in a California farming community where her father sharecropped an orchard, and her mother worked as a day laborer picking grapes and olives. As migrant workers hoping to attain U.S. citizenship, the couple, with their seven children, enjoyed weekend baseball games and picnics. Mary attended a local school during the week, where she sang "God Bless America" and learned English. On weekends, she went to Japanese classes and sang the Japanese anthem.

Then the war began. Curfew and travel restrictions were imposed. Then came a government-ordered evacuation of their home. In May 1942, the family left all their belongings with a rancher friend and traveled by bus to the Arboga Assembly Center near Marysville.

Forced to share cramped and unsanitary quarters with thousands of other Japanese, her hatred for the camp was rivaled only by a sense of guilt she felt for the assault on Pearl Harbor. She became depressed. "My periods stopped, and I couldn't eat," she says. "I was literally skin and bones. In those days, you never told people you were having mental problems. My father said we should have a positive attitude or risk being taken away. So I made the best of it – I had to."

In August that year, the family was transferred to Tule Lake on the California-Oregon border. There, Mary's health improved. She made friends, studied hard at school, and worked in the mess hall for a few dollars a month. But grief was never far away. When arsonists burned down her high school, Mary's father helped rebuild it. Days later, he died when the roof collapsed. And Mary's few glimpses of the outside world were tarnished by suspicion of her Japanese heritage. For a school award, she and some classmates were treated to a dinner at a Klamath Falls, Ore., restaurant. Customers refused to eat near them. "The looks on their faces were so hard to take," she recalls. "People left their dinners and walked out."

After the war, Mary discovered that her childhood friends never knew her fate. "The Japanese community was there one day and gone the next," she says. "One friend said her mother told her we all went to camp. To see these people years later and still not have them know ... bothered me."



CHARLES MCGEE

"I found acceptance for the ability I brought to the table."

Charles McGee enlisted in the Army Reserve in October 1942 and graduated with Tuskegee Army Air Field's Class 43-F. In a segregated military, the Tuskegee Airmen were recognized for military excellence as escorts by never losing a bomber to enemy fire. McGee flew 27 of 30 years of service, including 100 missions during the Korean War and 172 in Vietnam.

GENE DOUGHTY

"These were men who really, really wanted to succeed."

Gene Doughty was one of the first 100 blacks selected to have a chance to pursue their desire to become U.S. Marines. In 1943, he attended boot camp at Montford Point, N.C., and went on to fight at Iwo Jima. Doughty also fought the war against racism at home, pushing himself to exceed excellence in the Corps.

MARGARET BAILEY

"We were told we could only take care of black soldiers. We said, 'That's fine. You're going to get some good nursing care here.' And they did."

Margaret Bailey joined the U.S. Army Nurse Corps in 1944 after petitioning the surgeon general and urging the Army to accept more black nurses. She was stationed at Fort Huachuca, a German POW camp at the time, in Arizona. After the war, she served in Germany, France and Japan. In 1964, Bailey was the first black nurse to be promoted to lieutenant colonel. She retired as a colonel in 1971 with the Legion of Merit.



"The ball of fire went about 600 or 700 feet in the air and just engulfed the whole bow and foremast of the ship. We were all burned pretty much on 60 to 70 percent of our bodies. The Vestal was alongside, and there was a seaman onboard there. We caught his attention, and he threw us a heaving line attached to a heavier line. We were probably about 40 to 50 feet in the air. We proceeded to go hand over hand across that line to the Vestal, and that was after we were all burned. From there they took us to the naval hospital at Pearl Harbor. Everybody was hurting, and there were a lot of burn victims, so the nurses started marking our foreheads with lipstick so they could tell who'd had a morphine shot."

— Don Stratton, USS Arizona survivor

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THE NATIONAL WORLD WAR II MUSEUM

The National D-Day Museum opened in New Orleans on June 6, 2000, the 56th anniversary of the Normandy invasion that ultimately liberated Europe from Nazi occupation. But the museum's founder, author and historian Stephen Ambrose, always intended for it to go beyond D-Day and cover the entire American experience in the war.

Even before Congress designated it the National World War II Museum in 2003, plans were under way to super-size the facility. In 2005, the first phase of a four-year, \$300 million expansion began, one that will quadruple the museum's size.

"We've got a lot of story to tell," says Gordon "Nick" Mueller, museum president and CEO. "This will be an international destination for people to come and understand ... all the campaigns – the Mediterranean, North Africa, Italy, the naval war in the Atlantic and the Pacific, submarine warfare, the air war, the Battle of the Bulge, everything. The museum is going to be unlike anything anywhere else. It will be No. 1 in the world."

By June, the museum had raised \$70 million for

the expansion. Mueller says funding comes from three streams: some from Congress, some from the state of Louisiana, and the rest from individuals, foundations and corporations. In the end, he says, support will be about half public and half private.

American Legion Past National Commander William Detweiler (1994-1995) serves as the museum's special events manager.

Beyond the expansion, planned additions include:

- A train-station setting where visitors will receive a ticket to Normandy, Guadalcanal or another battle, and a dog tag containing a microchip that will prompt interactive exhibits and virtual experiences throughout the tour
- Tanks, airplanes, Jeeps and other vintage vehicles
- New galleries and exhibits, including "Great Campaigns of the War," "Mission and Services," "Liberation: Winning the Peace," "Fruits of Victory," and U.S. and victory pavilions
- A 400-seat theater to showcase original documentaries, with a signature film on World War II that will employ 4-D immersion technology
- A USO-style canteen and restaurant with exhibit space, featuring "Music of the War Years"



Upcoming conferences

"Duty, Honor, Country: When Baseball Went to War,"
Nov. 9-11

Scheduled topics include "Baseball on the Home Front: War Bond Sales, 'Fat-Free Games,' and Fields of Dreams," "Baseball on the Battlefield: Europe, North Africa and the Pacific," "From One Battlefield to Another: World War II, Baseball and Civil Rights," and more. Speakers include Bob Feller, Lou Brissie, Dom DiMaggio, Morrie Martin, Johnny Pesky and Jerry Coleman.

"American Memories of World War II As Seen Through Film: Hollywood, Documentaries and Newsreels," April 10-12

Scheduled topics include "Why We Fight: Propaganda, Newsreels, and Cartoons – Disney & Warner Brothers," "Behind Barbed Wire: Films on the Dark Side of World War II," "Holocaust: Formation of Public Memory Through 60 Years of Film," "American Idols: Military Leaders Portrayed Through Film – Eisenhower, Patton, LeMay and MacArthur," and more.

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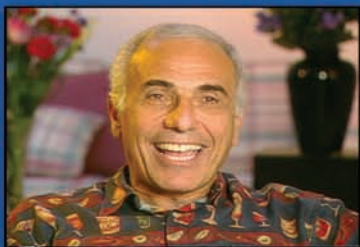
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‘EMOTIONAL ARCHAEOLOGY’

Renowned documentary filmmaker Ken Burns puts his arm around World War II.



Florentine Films

Last November, Ken Burns, for the first time, shared portions of his long-awaited World War II documentary, “The War,” with an audience. Not just any audience, but an entire ballroom full of authors, historians, and veterans of the greatest generation at the International Conference on World War II in New Orleans.

Even with two dozen films under his belt and twice that number of awards and accolades, the New Hampshire filmmaker considered the screening a crucial test. “This was going into the lions’ den,” he says.

In the end, those who might have been his toughest critics gave Burns and his co-director, Lynn Novick, a standing ovation. The reaction was especially satisfying in light of their decision to pursue a narrow and personal focus in the film, by examining the war through the stories of a handful of Americans in just four U.S. towns: Waterbury, Conn.; Mobile, Ala.; Sacramento, Calif.; and the tiny farming town of Luverne, Minn.

Now completed, and told completely from the American perspective, “The War” was selected for the Cannes Film Festival in May. In an unprec-

edented gesture, the festival screened the entire film – more than 14 hours. Burns was elated.

“I think it’s our best work,” he says. “I’ve never said that before about a film, and I think it just has to do with the emotional power of the stories that we were able to tell.”

With “The War” set to premiere Sept. 23 on PBS, Burns spoke with *The American Legion Magazine* about the film, his fascination with history, and his upcoming look at the national parks.

The American Legion Magazine: *Why did you select a World War II documentary as your next film?*

Ken Burns: It sort of selected us. We had vowed after “The Civil War” that we weren’t going to do anything else on war, but people would write and insist that we do something on this war or that war, usually the Second World War, and often from aging veterans or their kids, anxious that their parents’ long, private dramas be finally told. In large part, the kids, and sometimes the grand-kids, were finding that for the first time these unusually reticent men were willing to talk about what they had seen and done when they were young. And then we learned that a thousand veterans were dying a day, and that was just too awful to contemplate. I’m in the memory business, and that represented to me the hemorrhage of a great deal of memory. Coupled with the fact that our kids think we fought with the Germans against the Russians in the Second World War, we are on the verge of a kind of historic catastrophe, where we’re losing our memory, and we’re losing the very people who could correct it.

Q: *What can viewers expect from “The War”?*

A: I’ve always, in fact, called my work an emotional archaeology. We were less interested in the dry dates and the facts of the past than we were in a more complicated historical environment. At the same time, I would rather not tell people how to feel. I think war particularly, the most horrible of human experiences, unleashes a variety of very contradictory emotions. There’s great evil and sadness and loss and death and catastrophe and ruin, but there’s also great heroism and the highest aspects of human bravery and behavior. We’ve

“The War” will air on PBS over two weeks, beginning Sunday, Sept. 23 (four nights the first week and three nights the second week) from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. (8 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. on three nights).

tried to put our arm around that, without judgment, to show people what it was like to be in that war. I feel too many World War II works of the documentary stripe are distracted by celebrity generals and politicians and are mediated by an uneven emphasis on strategy and tactics, on weaponry and armament, and, of course, inexplicably, on all things Nazi. We just wanted to have an unmediated look of what it was like for so-called ordinary people to fight that war.

What we learned is that in extraordinary times there are no ordinary lives, and that is certainly the theme at the beating heart of our film. We wanted to show what it was like for this relatively isolated country, with an army in 1940 smaller than that of Romania, that was brutally attacked and suddenly had to find itself mobilizing in the greatest effort in its history, and where there were no red states or blue states, everybody was all together on this, and sell, most of all, at the center of it, the individual experiences not of the big-shot generals but of the ordinary privates and grunts who did the fighting and the dying in the war.

Q: *Where do you even start with a documentary film on such a broad subject?*

A: What we try to do when we approach a film is not to impose our own preconceptions on it, not to go out into a limited research period and then write a script on that research and then impose the dictates of that on not only the shooting but the editing. Instead we go with a very open mind, willing to change course if necessary. At one point very early on, we thought we'd just follow one town and ended up with four when we saw how potentially limiting that could be with regard to individual soldiers' experience in battle. We proceeded with our eyes wide open but our hearts and minds willing to be influenced constantly by changing perspectives. So every day was a stunning revelation. Sometimes it's just a fact that we didn't realize, a certain thing about battle, or it's the emotional revelation of a soldier who's speaking for the very first time, surprising not only us with the rawness of his commentary but surprising even his wife or his son or his daughter-in-law who might be listening in on our interview. We got below the surface, familiar image of World War II to bring back, I think, a sense that demystifies the war and hopes to strip it of the bloodless and gallant myths in which it has been smothered.

The Second World War comes down to us as "the good war," and we of course know why it's called that. Its causes were unambiguous. There



'IT WAS LIKE THE WHOLE WORLD HAD COME DOWN ON ME'

In "The War," Glenn Frazier recounts the horrors of the Bataan Death March.

Glenn Frazier grew up in Fort Deposit, Ala., working on his father's farm for a dollar a week. At 16, he ran away and joined the Army. Wanting to get as far from Alabama as he could, Frazier requested duty in the Philippines. But when Japan declared war on the United States, he found himself in the hell of the Bataan Death March, praying for his very life.

On April 9, 1942, at age 17, Frazier became a Japanese prisoner of war when Maj. Gen. Edward King surrendered his force of 70,000 Filipinos and Americans. On a forced march north to Camp O'Donnell, over 65 miles of rough terrain, thousands of prisoners were bayoneted or beaten to death. Along the way, Frazier managed to place his dog tags in a mass grave in the hope that their discovery would give his family closure.

"It was like the whole world had come down on me," he says. "I saw the Japanese cut guys' heads off, bury them alive, beat men if they broke ranks to get water. They were as cruel as could be. I marched six days and seven nights without food and sleep, and only a little rain water. At the end of the march, I couldn't pick up my feet, and my tongue was so swollen it wouldn't go back in my mouth."

The POW camp was hardly better. Many of the 54,000 who survived the march succumbed to torture or disease. Frazier ended up in a slave-labor camp in Japan, where he was starved, spat on by children, beaten with sticks and strips of leather, and put in solitary confinement before he finally escaped by train to Tokyo in September 1945. When he reached Gen. Douglas MacArthur's headquarters in Yokohama, he rejoiced at the sight of the U.S. flag.

Eventually, Frazier made it to San Francisco and called his family, who had been told he was dead when his dog tags were discovered. "My mother fainted when she answered the phone," he says. "Her sister was there, and she fainted. My sister was there, and she fainted. Then my daddy came to the phone and said, 'Who is this?' I told him it was Dowling – that's my middle name – and he said, 'I knew you wasn't dead. I've got three women lying here on the floor.' He told me to hold on while he got a pitcher of water and poured it on their heads."

Frazier spent the next 30 years battling nightmares of Bataan. "I went to God and told Him, 'I got to get rid of this, I can't take this anymore,'" he says. "My marriage wouldn't even last because I got to yelling and screaming so much. But I put my life back together. You can do that."

was no political debate in opposition to that war. It was good in that we were without doubt. But it was, of course, the worst war ever. This was the war that was responsible for the deaths of between 50 million and 70 million human beings. We wanted to put our arms around what that was like and experience it from the bottom up.

Q: *How did filming “The War” compare to “The Civil War,” which most critics consider your masterpiece?*

A: They’re the same because war is the same. We could have just taken the article off this film and called it just “War.” And you could import kids who are fighting in Iraq or soldiers, if you were able, who were fighting thousands of years ago, say, in the Peloponnesian War, and they would all say, “Yeah, this is how it was.”

We brought the Civil War alive with the use of very grainy, sepia-toned black-and-white photographs and first-person voices read by actors. And the voices they were reading were our great-great-grandfathers or, in many cases, our great-great-great grandfathers. This film is filled with spectacular still photography but also a great deal of footage, because we’re talking now about our fathers and our grandfathers, and that means we’re talking about people we know or knew. The emotional immediacy of that is what makes this transcendently different than the Civil War series and, I think, an even better film.

Q: *You’ve directed and produced documentaries about subjects as varied as jazz, baseball, Lewis and Clark, the Shakers and Frank Lloyd Wright. How do you choose your projects?*

A: I think in some ways I’ve made the same film over and over again. I’m seeking to understand, like a mechanic lifting the hood of a car, what makes my country work. So each film is asking a simple, deceptively simple, question: who are we? Who are these strange and complicated people who like to call themselves Americans? What does

an investigation of the past tell us not only about where we’ve been but where we are and where we are headed? What I look for in a subject is that sort of bell going off inside me, in my gut, that this is another way in – this is another avenue of exploration that will help shed some light on our own mechanics.

Q: *How much do you know about the subject of a film before you set about making it?*

A: Not much. I never want to make films about something I know about. If I tell you what I already know, it’s homework. If I share with you my excitement and discovery, that’s new.

The Ken Burns Collection

“The National Parks” (in production, 2009)
 “The War” (2007)
 “Unforgivable Blackness: The Rise and Fall of Jack Johnson” (2005)
 “Horatio’s Drive: America’s First Road Trip” (2004)
 “Mark Twain” (2001)
 “Jazz” (2001)
 “In the Marketplace” (2000)
 “Not For Ourselves Alone: The Story of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony” (1999)
 “Frank Lloyd Wright” (1998)
 “Lewis & Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery” (1997)
 “Thomas Jefferson” (1997)
 “The West” (1996)
 “Vézelay” (1996)
 “Baseball” (1994)
 “William Segal” (1992)
 “Empire of the Air: The Men Who Made Radio” (1991)
 “The Civil War” (1990)
 “Thomas Hart Benton” (1988)
 “The Congress” (1988)
 “Huey Long” (1985)
 “Statue of Liberty” (1985)
 “The Shakers: Hands to Work, Hearts to God” (1984)
 “Brooklyn Bridge” (1981)

Q: *What kind of organizational challenge did “The War” present for you?*

A: I live in New Hampshire, and we make maple syrup. It takes 40 gallons of sap to make one gallon of maple syrup. Making historical documentary films is sort of like that. You have to collect 40 or 50 times as much material to be able to work with material that will eventually be your finished film. We’ve got a finished film that is seven episodes and 14 and a half hours, so you can imagine the hundreds and literally thousands of hours of footage that we had to digest – interview transcripts, still-photograph logs and thousands of first-person voices, all of which contributed to a large organizational task that was challenging in the extreme. But the glory was these moments of discovery in an archive, in an interview bearing witness to the testimony of these incredibly brave young men and women, and then finding ways to put their stories together, to braid them into a complicated but nevertheless coherent narrative.

Q: *It must have taken quite a few others to help make the film.*

A: It’s a relatively small team. We have myself and my co-director and co-producer Lynn Novick, our principal writer, Geoffrey C. Ward, two or three other co-producers and

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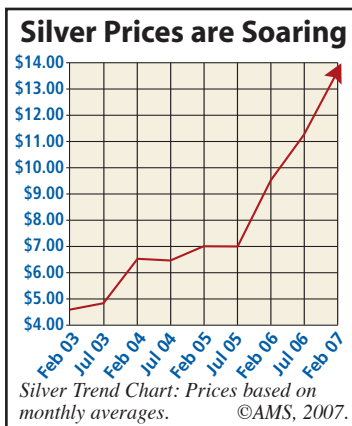


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associate producers. And then, on the editing side, three editors, their assistants and interns. This film is handmade, it's handcrafted, and that's the way we like it. I think that when you've got legions of researchers, you miss many things. In this case, the research was conducted by those at the center of the production. The third in command, producer Sarah Botstein, can tell you about weeks she spent in the bowels of the National Archives herself – an easily delegated task, usually delegated to the lowest rung in a production ladder, and we don't want it that way. So every one of us performs many, many different jobs, from overseeing music to editing to writing to fund-raising to shooting to interviewing.

Q: *In recent months you've taken some heat for what some say is too narrow of a focus in "The War" – specifically, that you didn't include any Latinos. How do you respond to critics?*

A: Well, it's not in the press; it's just from the Latino community, and I can understand. They've had their history marginalized for more than 500 years. This is a different kind of film. If we had attempted to be comprehensive and encyclopedic, they would have a completely legitimate concern, but in fact we are doing it from a very protected point of view. This is a free country, and one is able to do that. At the same time, well before the current concern, PBS initiated an educational outreach program that is spurring each of the individual states' affiliate stations to produce their own films. It also has an educational component that will reach into all the nation's schools. We had partnered, well before the controversy became known, with the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project to encourage individuals from around the country to tell their stories. But we also heard these new concerns. We listened to the Hispanic community and hired a Hispanic producer, and we are engaged right this moment in producing an extra chapter that will go on the end of the first episode to help tell their story. But it must be remembered that there are many, many other groups that are not represented. We tried to focus on universal human experiences – not what makes us different from one another, but what makes us the same.

Q: *What filmmakers have inspired you?*

A: I was originally taught by social documentary still photographers. I went to Hampshire College in Amherst, Mass., in the early 1970s, graduating in 1975, and there I was taught in an almost medieval

way by a true mentor, Jerome Liebling, and Elaine Mayes. These people rearranged my molecules. I literally don't recognize the person who went into Hampshire and the person who came out. And a large part of the influence for me was the relationship with telling stories with still images and being aware of the past through the evidence of still photographs. I'd always wanted to be a filmmaker, so it was just a marrying of these two impulses.

Q: *What is your next project?*

A: Well, I've been very fortunate. I just signed up with public television until 2022. As I've said many times, given a thousand years to live I wouldn't run out of topics in American history. We are currently editing a massive six-part, 12-and-a-half hour series on the history of the national parks. For the first time in human history – Americans forget this – land was set aside not for the privilege of kings or for royalty but for everybody for all time. Ideas and individuals and the collisions with those opposed to the creation of parks creates one hell of a good story. That love of land is the heart of true patriotism, I think.

We're also working on a new episode to add to our baseball series, what we're calling our "10th inning." The first series was nine episodes, or innings, and we thought we'd add an extra story that brought things up to date. I'm not exactly sure how long it will be, probably two hours. And we're beginning to look ahead at our 10-year plan with PBS that would include several new series: films on Franklin Roosevelt, biographies of various other people and institutions, and even a biography of the buffalo, an important and symbolic figure.

Q: *You've been called the most influential documentary maker ever. How do you handle that kind of recognition?*

A: I live in a little village in New Hampshire that I moved to 20 years ago, and I think it's kept me from getting a swelled head. Moving to Walpole was the best professional decision I ever made. I miss the society of my colleagues, but this is an area where I can live inexpensively and put everything into the filmmaking process. The people who have been attracted to work with me feel the same way. The town has been around for a couple of hundred years or more. All of the notoriety and celebrity I've had ... for 50 cents gets you a cup of coffee. ☕

Interview: Matt Grills

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THE MICHAEL PETERSON PROJECT

Country musician takes a simple fundraising idea and amplifies it.

When country music entertainer Michael Peterson and The American Legion partnered up earlier this year in a fund-raising effort for The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund, Peterson's initial vision was simply to produce a DVD featuring a vocal tribute to the world's largest veterans organization – his song, "It's Who We Are."

Six months later, Peterson's project has grown into something much bigger than a music video.

The newly produced DVD, which was set to debut at the 89th American Legion National Convention in Reno, Nev., indeed contains a video of Peterson's song, but it also includes several special features to build awareness of the Legion's many programs. Fifty percent of

the profits from DVD sales will go to The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund, which provides college money for the children of U.S. servicemembers killed on active duty since Sept. 11, 2001.

The video accompanying Peterson's song features patriotic images and Legionnaires in action through the years. It also has a special feature titled "What is The American Legion?" It explains the four pillars of The American Legion and includes interviews with such spokespersons as actor and Legionnaire R. Lee Ermey and retired Gen. Richard Myers, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Viewers of the DVD also will have a better understanding of how The American Legion's many programs benefit a broad range of Americans.

Another special feature explains The American Legion Legacy Scholarship and includes interviews with various celebrities and



Legionnaires, along with public-service announcements about how to donate to the scholarship fund. The DVD also contains information about how to join The American Legion and how to order “It’s Who We Are.”

National Commander Paul A. Morin has stressed the four pillars of The American Legion during his tenure. “It’s Who We Are” touches on all four. The DVD can be shown at post meetings, community events and membership open houses, and can explain the Legion’s mission in just 20 minutes.

“I think this shows how The American Legion is willing to spearhead any cause helping children of men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice,” Morin said. “When you can get an entertainer like Michael Peterson to help out with the cause, it’s only going to help make sure those children are taken care of.”

Peterson talked with *The American Legion Magazine* about the evolution of his idea and what drives his patriotism.

Q: Now that it’s wrapped up, how do you feel about the DVD?

A: When it started off, it was just going to be a song, “It’s Who We Are,” which was written for the national convention last year. But as

we began to discuss possibilities, we realized, “Wow, we could essentially create a more powerful piece that has a bunch of different facets.” The vision for the DVD has been fulfilled. The vision was to allow any Legionnaire to simply hit “play” and show it to any audience. Give them a broader understanding in a way that’s highly inviting, of what’s going on with The American Legion. To be entertaining, inspirational, and highly informational – that was the target, and I think we’ve accomplished that in a way that’s also connected to a higher purpose: raising awareness,

helping recruiting, and raising funds for the American Legacy Scholarship.

As the national spokesperson for the American Legacy Scholarship, I see a chance for us to not only tell people about the scholarship program but also to introduce

people to the incredible organization called The American Legion.

Q: Do you believe this DVD can be a recruiting tool for The American Legion?

A: A number of people I interviewed said they hadn’t joined The American Legion until somebody asked them. It’s simple as just asking somebody. In this package we’ve put together, there’s actually a beautiful invitation: “Come join The American Legion.” I think there’s a lot of supporting visuals and stories to make it a compelling invitation.

Q: How did you become involved with troop-support efforts?

A: For me, the passion runs back to a statement made by Teddy Roosevelt: “Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.” I wasn’t in the military. I didn’t really grow up around that. I was deeply impacted, obviously, by 9/11, had a desire to do something but didn’t know what I could do. At the same time, my daughter was just getting involved with Junior ROTC, and I saw the tremendous impact it had on her life. She ended up being battalion commander of nearly 400 students in high school. I got this desire to do something. The opportunity came for me to go sing for some soldiers heading to Fort Campbell to depart for the Middle East. Boy, what an amazing evening I had there. And I started making myself available, doing what Teddy Roosevelt said to do. That just led to me feeling like, “Here’s something that I can do to make a contribution. I can use my talents as a communicator and a musician to make a difference.”

Q: How did you begin your association with the U.S. Army?

A: I spent 12 years as a public-school speaker prior to moving to Nashville in 1995. From 1996 through early 2000, I had a terrific run in the music business. I was the top-selling new male artist in all of country music from 1997 to 1998, was nominated for every major award you can be nominated for as a new artist, won several, but found myself on the back side of that missing part of what I had spent 12 years doing: speaking to kids and speaking to communities. So I began to dream in about 2004, 2005, that you could bring the idea of a community event together

In 1997, Michael Peterson’s self-titled album (Warner/Reprise Records) produced five hits: “From Here to Eternity” (No. 1 on *Billboard*’s country charts), “Drink, Swear, Steal and Lie” (No. 3), “Too Good To Be True” (No. 5), “When the Bartender Cries” (No. 27), and “By The Book” (No. 19). He was named Top New Artist by both *Billboard* and *Radio and Records* magazines.

with the power of a hit record and really make an impact. As we began to develop this idea, the U.S. Army stepped alongside us and said, "Hey, we like that idea, and we'd like to help support that." The U.S. Army is making

a strategic contribution to the future security of our nation by investing in young people and investing in community. The new Army campaign is "Army Strong," all about being emotionally strong, being mentally strong, being physically strong. There is no other organization that I know of that equips a young person to be all three of those in a way that becomes more than a sum of the parts. So they had an interest in helping our outreach.

Purchase a DVD

DVDs are \$10 each, plus \$2 shipping and handling. More information is available online.

www.legion.org

www.michaelpetersonmusic.com

Peterson and his music label, Primoris Records, have also produced a DVD featuring Peterson's music video, "I Remember America." Primoris will donate a percentage of all DVD sales to The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund. More details will be available soon.

www.irememberamerica.com

Q: *How do you plan to spread your message?*

A: The tour will begin in January and will run through May. We'll do two events a month. There are 20 cities on the list, and we'll choose 10 of those. They're five-day events that will encompass the community with school-assembly programs, outreach in the community during the week, and culminate in a Saturday-night community celebration where we will recognize outstanding people in the community who have done incredible things in service and support of our military. I'm so proud to be associated with our servicemembers, with these people who make an immeasurable contribution to sustaining our freedom, and they do so often with great sacrifice and risk to themselves. I want to do everything I can to send a message to them and to people who live in these communities that this is important. I'm so proud and excited to have the Army as a sponsor. They believe that if you're going to grow some great Americans, you are going to have to plant seeds of values.

Q: *How did the "I Remember America" project come about with Primoris Records?*

A: I've talked about bringing together a

community with the power of a hit record. Well, I haven't had a hit record for a number of years, but I always dreamed as I began to point myself in a new direction that it would be possible to do again. We made a record about a year ago, and then we began to search for the right partner. That right partner would have to be a record company that shared a value and a concern for the things that I'm interested in doing. Primoris Records is distributed by Universal, which is the largest distributor of music in the world, and it happens to be founded by a gentleman, George Burton, who was 14 years in the Navy. One of the principal partners retired as a colonel in the Army. When you have two of the main players at the label who have a deep, deep background in the military and service to our nation, they really resonated with this idea. It just became clear to me that this was a great fit.

One of the songs that will be on the new album, which will be released in January, is called "I Remember America." As you listen to it, it evokes not just nostalgia, but it gives voice to the unspoken feeling that a lot of Americans have: "I remember when you didn't have to lock your doors at night/I remember when it was more of an innocent time/I remember when I felt a little safer." Inherent in that is the invitation to make a contribution toward restoring some of that in our nation.

Q: *There's more to this project than just music.*

A: We have created a Web site where young people can go and participate in an essay contest to win a college scholarship, which is the first quarter of the project. In the second quarter of this project, we will do a photo-journalism contest. The winning photos will be edited into a new version of the video, which will be posted online. The third quarter will be a YouTube-style video contest where people will make their own version of the video, and in the fourth quarter we will release a book that has the best of the essays, the best of the photos, and a packet that includes a DVD, hopefully with some of the winning videos. It's a year-long promotion just to invite people to the conversation of how to make America a better place. 🌿

Interview: Steve Brooks

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Composition of the enemy

The average, everyday terrorist is influenced by more than desperation.

BY RICHARD MINITER

As the war on terrorism enters its seventh year, we need to know how terrorists are made. What sets them apart, and what attracts them to lives of death and murder? The standby answer is that terrorism is caused by poverty.

At first, it seems quite plausible that terrorists are poor people driven by desperation. After all, a person with a good education, a decent salary and a loving family has a lot for which to live. Religious extremists, who often claim they are impatient to die, presumably have none of these advantages.

An authoritative study of the demographics of terrorists was published by Marc Sageman of the University of Pennsylvania, and is found in his latest book, "Inside Terror Networks." Sageman is not your typical ivory-tower expert. He served as a CIA case officer working with anti-Soviet Afghan rebels in Islamabad, Pakistan, from 1987 to 1989. He then became a forensic psychiatrist, devoting countless hours to interviewing, analyzing, writing and testifying about murderers.

Then came Sept. 11, 2001. "After leaving the CIA, I was happy in my naïve belief that I had left all that behind me," he said. "But after 9/11, like everyone, I wanted to do something."

He decided to compile one of the world's largest terrorist databases outside government hands. He collected 400 biographies, mostly al-Qaeda members, from public records like court documents and began listing them. Fusing his skills as a CIA officer with those of forensic psychiatry, he began looking for patterns visible only after surveying large numbers of cases.

What Sageman discovered confounds most of the conventional wisdom about terrorists. These people are not poor, nor are they deprived of opportunities. "(A)bout three-fourths of global Salafi Mujahedin (the radical Islamic movement of which al-Qaeda is a part) was solidly upper or middle class," he writes.

The vast majority, 90 percent, came from caring, intact families. Sixty-three percent had attended college, as compared with the customary 5 percent to 6 percent for the rest of the Third World. In many ways, the majority of terrorists are the best and brightest of their societies.

What about the roughly one-quarter of terrorists from poor backgrounds? They are found to be either Arab emigrants from Morocco or Algeria, or French Catholics who converted to Islam, often in French prisons. Most are beneficiaries of a generous European welfare state, receiving free or low-cost housing, free education – including medical or law school – free health care and a small stipend for daily expenses. By Third World standards, these people are not poor, but rich. What these poorer terrorists have in common with their well-heeled comrades is a sense of social exclusion or alienation, a point to which I will return.

Sageman's study challenges other notions about terrorists. He finds, on the whole, that al-Qaeda recruits are not immature or easily impressionable youngsters. They join the bin Laden network at an average age of 26.

Are they crazy? Sageman doesn't think so. "As a psychiatrist, originally I was looking for any characteristics common to these men. But only four of the 400 had any hint of a disorder. This is below the worldwide base rate for thought disorders. So they are as healthy as the general population."

What, then, transforms these men from pillars of their societies to enemies of ours?

Sageman isn't surprised by the lack of evidence for mental disorders. "While terrorism is a profoundly anti-social activity, from the terrorists' point of view, it is also a highly social one," he said. "It is carried out by groups, groups that don't tolerate sociopaths like Unabomber Ted Kaczynski."

Nor have they suffered from soured careers. Many are professionals, mostly with backgrounds in science or engineering, or training and skills as police officers or mechanics. There is a pattern, however, to their educational choices. Few of the terrorists in Sageman's sample have studied the liberal arts or, interestingly, religion. Indeed, most were not very religious before joining the terror organization.



Seventy-three percent of Sageman's sample are married men. Again, this does not support the idea of destitution and desperation as a driving force for terrorism; employed, educated men in the Arab world are more likely to find wives than jobless, uneducated ones. Most of the rest are college students, another privileged group.

Other scholars' findings support Sageman's research. The demographics of Palestinian terrorists reveal a pattern: terrorists, especially suicide bombers, tend to be drawn from the middle class and above, and they have a much higher level of education than their countrymen.

Consider two recent studies of the demographics of Palestinian terrorists. While working for a U.N. relief agency, Nasra Hassan spent three years, from 1996 to 1999, interviewing Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip. He noted, "None of them were uneducated, desperately poor, simple-minded or depressed. Many were middle class and, unless they were fugitives, held paying jobs ... Two were the sons of millionaires."

Claude Berrebi, a Princeton University economist, created a database of 285 suicide bombers' biographies, drawing on material published between 1987 and 2002 in the Arabic-language magazines of several terrorism groups: Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and the Palestinian Liberation Organization. He found that suicide bombers tend to come from better-off families than average. Less than 15 percent of suicide bombers are from poor families, while 30 percent of Palestinians of comparable age – 16 to 50 in both samples – are poor. Nor are they uneducated. Some 60 percent of suicide attackers in Israel or the Palestinian territories have attended or completed college, compared to less than 20 percent of the Palestinian population.

Foreign fighters in Iraq hail from the same backgrounds as other radical Islamic killers. Israeli researcher Reuven Paz studied 154 Arab terrorists killed in Iraq in 2004 and found that many were married, well-educated and from well-off Saudi families. His research was based on Web postings by radical Islamic groups, notices not meant for the outside world but for the friends and families of deceased militants.

Consider just two cases. One is medical student Ahmed Said Ghandi, who died in a suicide bombing that killed 22 people. Another is the reigning kung fu champion of Jordan. Doctors and Olympic-class athletes do not hail from the bottom of any society. Something else – not poverty – is driving these people to kill.

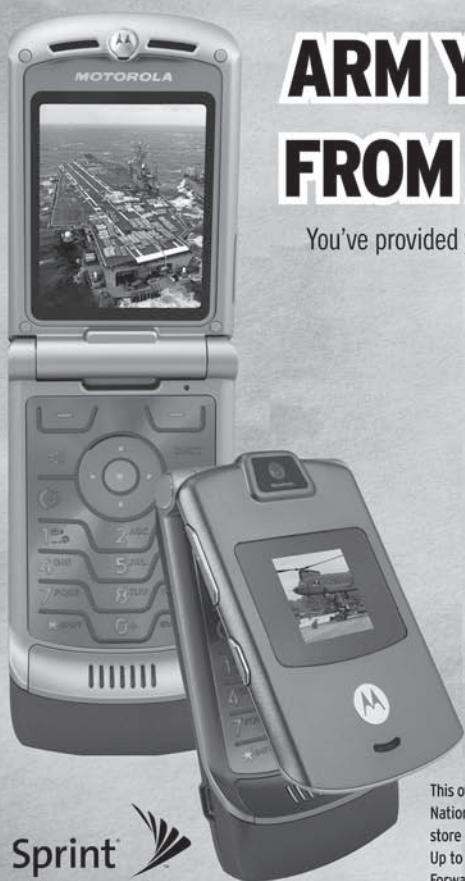
Interestingly, surveys of terrorists from the 1960s and 1970s reveal that it is primarily a middle-class occupation. Charles Russell and Bowman Miller tracked 350 terrorists in Latin America, Europe and Asia, including the Middle East, from 1966 to 1976 – the first decade of major terrorism. They concluded that more than two-thirds of arrested terrorists "came from the middle or upper classes in their respective nations or areas ... In fact, approximately two-thirds of these identified terrorists are persons with some university training, university graduates or post-graduate students."

Are terrorists who are not poor motivated by concern about the perceived poverty of their fellow countrymen? This is possible but seems unlikely. If the poverty of their people were an important issue, then economic deprivation would be regularly cited in terrorist manifestos or audio tapes. Yet terrorists' tracts, especially those distributed by al-Qaeda and its various affiliates, rarely mention any economic concerns.

And if sympathy for the poor is a major motivation for terrorists, the poorest countries would produce the most terrorists. Despite the odd al-Qaeda figure from Tanzania or the Koromos Islands, most hail from oil-rich lands or Western Europe. In fact, the world's poorest nations suffer more terrorism than rich countries. While violence and civil war are common at the planet's poorest places, terrorism in Burma, Chad and countries of similar economic condition is all but unheard of. When terrorists do attack poor nations, the target is almost invariably a U.S. embassy or other building affiliated with a foreign power, and the attackers come from richer countries.

Finally, a terrorist attack, as well as the resulting clampdown by police and military, tends to be economically harmful. Businesses relocate. Investors retreat. Roadblocks and other measures restrict the movements of workers and customers. The economy of the West Bank has been devastated by bombings and Israeli roadblocks. Local Palestinians are jobless by the thousands. If improving the economic lot of their nation's poor is a goal, terrorists would not select targets certain to damage the economy. Yet new clinics, schools and bridges are frequent scenes of bombings. Why?

The reason is simple and punctures the idea that poverty provokes terror. A terror network gets no political benefit, no credit, for its work. It is, in fact, put at a disadvantage; others are building a base of political support in the community while the terrorists are not. That's why aid workers are



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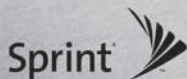
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treated as political enemies and killed or kidnapped. From a terrorist's perspective, they are political enemies, rivals as much as any government or other terrorist group. That means terrorists worry more about winning political points than righting economic wrongs.

Terrorism is an extension of politics by deadly means. Its goals are inherently political, not economic. The chief aim of most significant terrorist campaigns – from the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka to al-Qaeda – is to force a government to yield sovereign control to the terror group over some slice of territory. Al-Qaeda wants, among other things, the closure of U.S. bases in Saudi Arabia, with the aim of taking control of the oil kingdom. These are not economic goals, but political ones.

So why do people from middle-class families with good educations join terror networks? Research supports three related causes:

1. Alienation. Sageman's sample reveals that 80 percent are in some way totally excluded from the society in which they live. They are foreign students who do not fit in, or they are immigrants to Europe who do not assimilate. Seventy percent of the terrorists in Sageman's sample joined a terror group when they were living outside their home countries.

Mohammed Atta, the 9/11 ringleader, originally stayed with a German host family later interviewed by a colleague of mine at London's *Sunday Times*. They were German liberals who believed cultural exchange could bridge the divide between the West and the Middle East. With horror, they watched Atta become more and more alienated. He grew increasingly hostile to Western music, and insisted on cooking his native cuisine. They said he was overwhelmed by Western society, friendless and alone. Eventually, Atta moved out and spent as much time as possible with fellow Muslim immigrants. Then, tragically for 3,000 innocent people, he met an al-Qaeda recruiter who led him to jihad.

2. Personal bonds. Eighty-eight percent of terrorists in the Sageman study are related by blood, marriage or friendship to other terrorists. Sixty percent worship at one of 10 mosques worldwide or attended one of two now-closed schools in Indonesia. "You're talking about a very select, small group of people," Sageman concludes.

He sees a "common trajectory" for the terrorists in his study. Far from home and alienated, they sought out people like themselves and became friends with people connected to the global jihad.

"When they became homesick, they did what anyone would and tried to congregate with people like themselves," Sageman said. "So they drifted towards the mosque, not because they were religious but because they were seeking friends. They moved in together, in apartments, in order to share the rent and also to eat together – they were mostly halal, those who observe the Muslim dietary laws. A micro-culture develops that strengthens and absorbs the participants as a unit."

3. Group dynamics. Once a network of friendships evolves into a cell, certain group dynamics take over. Cell members feel they cannot betray their friends. The suicide bombers in Spain are a perfect example, Sageman writes. "Seven terrorists sharing an apartment and one saying, 'Tonight we're all going to go, guys.' Individually, they probably would not have done it."

In time, the group fills an empty life with purpose, and the secrecy involved imbues it with a sense of importance and drama. A Hamas leader told Hassan how the organization uses indoctrination to keep cell members motivated, saying, "We focus his attention on paradise, on being in the presence of Allah, on meeting the Prophet Mohammed." The group usually videotapes a cell member declaring allegiance to the cause and willingness to die for it. The videos serve as a kind of blackmail, an implied threat to shame the individual if he thinks about backing out.

What does all of the research collectively tell us?

Terrorism is caused not by mass material poverty but by individual spiritual poverty – a longing to belong, fueled by the interventions of recruiters. If counterterrorism officials can identify and arrest these recruiters, we can prevent many from joining their ranks. But teachers, principals and community leaders also have an important part to play. They need to reach out to foreign students and others who feel excluded, educating them about the psychological traps terrorists lay.

Once we acknowledge that this is how terrorists are made, we begin to understand how they can be unmade. 🌿

Richard Miniter is the New York Times bestselling author of "Losing bin Laden: How Bill Clinton's Failures Unleashed Global Terror" and "Shadow War: The Untold Story of How Bush Is Winning the War on Terror." He is a fellow at the Hudson Institute.



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Two years removed from the devastating hurricane season of 2005, Gulf Coast veterans persevere.

BY JAMES V. CARROLL

A full two years after Hurricane Katrina blasted across the Gulf Coast, local communities are still digging out, cleaning up and trying to rebuild. The rampaging Katrina and sister storms Rita and Wilma left behind billions of dollars in property losses and hundreds of deaths. Entire communities were obliterated. Roads and bridges were destroyed. Millions of survivors were left without electricity, and tens of thousands were made homeless.

American Legion post facilities also were toppled, some by the hurricane winds, others by storm tides. Most post homes in the storm's path sustained at least some damage. Only a few were unscathed.

Two years have now passed. American Legion department adjutants in affected states say recovery has ranged from swift to none. Difficulties settling insurance claims have hampered recovery efforts in some instances. Scarcity of

LEFT: Katrina ravaged Post 160 in Pascagoula, Miss., but members vowed they would celebrate Christmas in a remodeled post. They missed their self-imposed deadline by six months and had their holiday party in the summer of 2006. James V. Carroll

building supplies and availability of contractors, overloaded by devastation often described as resembling an atomic-bomb blast in the months following the hurricanes, have further slowed the recovery.

Especially hard-hit Louisiana has endured substantial population loss, as well as property damages, says American Legion Department Adjutant David Simon. As Katrina approached, Gulf Coast Legionnaires evacuated with tens of thousands of others, and many have not returned.

"A lot of folks have no homes to return to," Simon explains. "Many families escaped with little more than their shirts on their backs. They returned to the Gulf Coast to find nothing left of their homes except concrete slabs. Many people who have returned are living in FEMA trailers. Legionnaires are scattered all over the map, and in most cases we don't know where they are."

In Louisiana, Katrina destroyed or heavily damaged Grand Chenier Post 364, Cameron Post 176, Buras Post 193 and Slidell Post 374, says Raymond Walters, department commander at the time of the catastrophe. Grand Chenier and Buras posts have not yet been rebuilt. The Slidell post is up and running, and Cameron Legionnaires are meeting at the local courthouse. No fewer than 19 Louisiana posts sustained at least some storm damage.

"In all my years, I have never seen the kind of damage down here," Walters says. "But you know, Legionnaires across Louisiana didn't miss a beat. Some who lost everything rolled up their sleeves to help others. Posts that were not damaged, and even some that were, welcomed folks who had lost their homes. Other posts served as collection and distribution points for food and clothing. DeRidder Post 27 took on the role of shelter and staging center for diabetics who needed transportation to and from the post to the local hospital. That's what veterans do."

Mississippi Adjutant John Bracy has made similar observations. Waveland Post 77 and Gulfport Post 119 were obliterated. Pascagoula Post 160, Biloxi Post 33, Bay St. Louis Post 139, Gautier Vancleave Post 1992, Moss Point Post 243, Long Beach Post 1195 and Ocean View Post 42 took damage but are now back up and running.

"Waveland, two blocks from the ocean, was swept away," Bracy says. "Nothing was left except a concrete slab and a flagpole. Today, they are meeting in plastic Quonset huts. It's been very slow going for them. They are hurting as far as funding goes. But they have broken ground at a new site, and the post is making a comeback."

The future of the Gulfport post is even less certain. In an effort to rebuild and to ultimately assist other hurricane-devastated Legion posts – and to repay The American Legion



Louisiana Recovery Field Office deputy director Mike Smith inspects the remains of a home destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. Army Corps of Engineers

In the Eye of Hurricane Relief

Ohio post commander helps lead the New Orleans cleanup.

Mike Smith, commander of American Legion Post 398 in southeastern Ohio, is a long way from home, putting his military discipline, experience and sense of community service to work in hurricane-torn New Orleans. Now serving as deputy director of the Corps of Army Engineers' Louisiana Recovery Field Office, his mission is to lead the effort to demolish and clear debris caused by the devastating hurricane season of 2005.

Smith, 60, served two of his six years as a Marine in the Vietnam War with the 1st Marine Air Wing. He retired in 2002 from Headquarters Army Corps of Engineers after 20 years service. Today, he finds himself back at work as a civilian employee of the Army Corps of Engineers. He spoke to *The American Legion Magazine* from his field office in New Orleans.

Q. How are recovery efforts progressing in the New Orleans area?

A. It's going very well. We've done a tremendous amount of work. We've moved close to 13 million



Fewer than 1,800 people attended a three-day fundraising jamboree, dashing hopes of Gulfport, Miss., Post 119 members who hoped to use the proceeds to rebuild their post home and others. Post Commander Jim Tolar vows to renew efforts by obtaining sponsorship for future jamborees. James V. Carroll

National Emergency Fund (NEF), which provided veterans and their families more than \$2 million in cash grants in the days and weeks after Katrina – Gulfport members voted to raise money by promoting a three-day country-and-western music jamboree. “The volunteers, food vendors, carnival rides, and all the music stars were there,” says Post 119 commander Jim Tolar. “But the crowd was not. We needed to sell 8,000 three-day passes to break even, but fewer than 1,800 people showed up.”

When the bills were paid, the post had lost \$715,000 – a devastating blow in the face of hope to rebuild and help others in the region as well. “The music acts put on a great show,” Tolar says. “We had Tanya Tucker, Lee Greenwood, the Bellamy Brothers, Pam Tillis, David Frizzell, John Michael Montgomery, Moe Bandy and a handful of other country-and-western music acts. We had hoped to clear \$1 million this year and \$10 million over the next five years, but it didn’t work out that way.”

Disappointed? Yes. Discouraged? No.

“A number of the music performers have told me they will come back next year at no charge if we decide to put on another jamboree,” Tolar says. “They want to help Gulf Coast Legionnaires rebuild their posts so that veterans can continue to be leaders in their communities.”

One singer at the Jamboree, Chet Lott, fully understands the challenge of Gulf Coast veterans forced from their jobs, homes and communities. His father, U.S. Sen. Trent Lott, R-Miss., lost his home to Katrina.

“Our family knows firsthand how devastating it is to lose your home and everything in it,” the singer said, following his performance at the Jamboree. “It’s a shame there were not more people here to enjoy the show. The veterans put together a great show for a great purpose.”

→ cubic yards of debris since we started. We’ve covered more than 81,000 houses with blue roof material – enough to cover nine square miles. At the start, we brought in approximately 216 modular units from across the country to set up schoolrooms and another 100 units for police stations and fire departments and other critical facilities. We’ve demolished approximately 3,500 houses. And, of course, we helped restore water and power.

Q. *How many people are working with you?*

A. We have approximately 500 from all over the country. There are veterans from all branches of service from the Vietnam War to the Iraq and Afghanistan wars and everywhere in between. Since the operation began, more than 3,000 people have rotated in and out.

Q. *What are the primary challenges?*

A. If you look along the Gulf Coast shore from Alabama to Louisiana, you see complete, utter destruction. So it was just a matter of moving debris. Here in the city of New Orleans and Orleans Parish, flooding left buildings behind – some of them collapsed, and some of them were washed off their foundations. A tremendous number of them will never again be suitable for habitation. So the problem is that the houses are there. If it were just a matter of removing these devastated structures, it wouldn’t take long to clear the neighborhoods. But these damaged homes are tied to people for generations, so we just can’t go in and doze a house and take it down. It’s a long and arduous task for the city to go through the condemnation process.

Q. *When will the Corps complete its mission?*

A. We have reached an agreement with all government entities involved to continue demolition in New →

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Tolar has not abandoned the idea of raising enough money to rebuild the Legion's presence along the coast and to replenish the NEF.

"The membership has decided to sell our beachfront property in Gulfport and use the money from the sale to build a new post a bit inland, north of the interstate," he says. "And we haven't given up on efforts to raise money for other posts.

We just don't know what form it will take. We are talking to a couple of corporate organizations that may be interested in sponsoring some sort of event next year."

Legion posts in Alabama fared better than those in Mississippi and Louisiana, says Alabama Department Adjutant Braxton Bridges. But the Alabama coast, too, was viciously ripped apart and flooded by the 2005 hurricane season.

"We were pretty fortunate," Bridges says. "Part of the roof was blown off of Post 76 outside Mobile. It was quickly repaired, and the post was up and running within two days."

Winds in excess of 100 mph and storm tides 11 feet high shifted the retired battleship USS *Alabama* out of its stationary mooring in Mobile Bay. Vintage aircraft were tossed, twisted and thrown into a corner of a nearby aviation museum. Downtown Mobile was flooded. Cargo ships, fishing boats

and pleasure crafts were lifted on the surge and strewn across the land as water receded. Coastal communities such as Bayou La Batre sustained serious damage.

Immediately following the mayhem, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana Legionnaires sprang into action. They collected and distributed water, food, clothing and other relief supplies. They helped clean up their communities in the aftermath. Posts opened their doors to provide shelter to victims of Katrina and Rita. Volunteers conducted health screenings and helped families reunite. And in a perfect symbol of faith in the future, the DeRidder post in Louisiana coordinated a wedding for a displaced New Orleans couple.

"The American Legion is more than veterans helping veterans," says American Legion National Commander Paul A. Morin. "The American Legion family is also about veterans assisting their communities – not just in times of crisis, but day after day after day. The swift, efficient and compassionate way in which Gulf Coast Legionnaires stepped forward in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita testifies to that commitment." 🌿

James V. Carroll is an assistant editor for The American Legion Magazine.

→ Orleans and Orleans Parish through Sept. 30. The direct federal assistance undertaken by the Corps will change at that time to an applicant-managed program. FEMA will then work directly with New Orleans officials and any future demolition will be done by the city. We still have work in Jefferson Parish that will probably continue through December.

Q. *How is it that you are back working for the Corps of Engineers?*

A. After I retired, the Army Corps of Engineers established a program to call back into service retirees who had expertise that could be used in time of a national emergency. I had worked several hurricanes during my career, including Hugo, Fran and Floyd. When Katrina hit, I was asked if I would volunteer, and I did. I arrived in Louisiana on Sept. 11, 2005.

The first time I came down, I came for six months. We built a victim-identification center, or morgue, between New Orleans and Baton Rouge. I went home for six months thinking I was done. I got a telephone call from the Corps asking if I would come back down as deputy director of the field office. I was actually at the Legion's national convention in Salt Lake City when I got the second call. I stayed down here until the end of the year before taking a break back home. This time I've been here since March.

Q. *How do you manage to keep your post commander obligations?*

A. I would not be able to do it without my officers. They are a great group and are very supportive of what I am doing. I think they agree this is very important work. I also communicate with them often and catch up on things when I get a chance to return home. 🌿

Interview: James V. Carroll



Roof repair and interior damage to Post 76 near Mobile, Ala., was completed within two days. James V. Carroll

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[BY THE NUMBERS]

The Ad Council conducted a national survey of businesses with fewer than 1,000 employees each in December 2006 and found:

88 percent of respondents said it is "very" or "somewhat" important for businesses to take steps to prepare for a catastrophic disaster, such as an earthquake, hurricane or terrorist attack

47 percent said their company has an emergency plan in place in the event of a disaster - an increase of 8 percent from 2005

66 percent assessed their own business as "very" or "somewhat" prepared in the event of a disaster, a 7-percent increase from 2005

The study also indicated that businesses perceive fire, cyber attacks, natural disasters and terrorism as key threats. In addition it showed that businesses are more concerned about weather emergencies that are common in their geographic area, such as hurricanes in the Southeast and earthquakes in the West.

[VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION]

VETERAN CARE, CLAIMS AT A CROSSROADS

Less than three months after The American Legion's National Executive Committee passed a resolution authorizing legal action against VA over a rising backlog of unresolved claims, a coalition of injured Iraq war veterans filed a class-action suit in California over a variety of VA deficiencies, VA Secretary R. James Nicholson announced plans to resign, and a federal commission delivered a 29-page recommendation list on how the government can improve treatment of wounded servicemembers.



Bob Dole and Donna Shalala led the effort to correct problems after Walter Reed exposure. AP

Former U.S. Sen. Bob Dole and former Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala headed a nine-member panel that suggested rewiring the disability-rating system and dramatically improving care for returning veterans who've suffered brain injuries. The bipartisan commission was formed after unsanitary conditions were revealed in a DoD outpatient facility adjacent to Walter Reed Army Medical Center last winter.

The commission recommended comprehensive health recovery plans and development of a corps of highly trained coordinators to help affected servicemembers; simplification of disability determination and compensation system; improvement of the system for diagnosing and treating post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injuries; stronger support for families; and development of a Web-based information source for servicemembers that combines DoD and VA databases

The group of Iraq veterans filed suit in July claiming VA had broken the law by denying them prompt disability pay and timely mental health treatment. The suit blamed VA for inadequate staffing and alleged that VA worked with the Pentagon to misclassify PTSD claims as pre-existing personality disorders to avoid paying out benefits.

MILESTONES IN AMERICAN LEGION HISTORY

➔ March 1919

The American Legion is founded in Paris by members of the American Expeditionary Force.

May 1919

A caucus meeting in St. Louis adopts "The American Legion" as the organization's official name. A draft constitution is approved, as is its preamble, which begins "For God and Country, we associate ourselves together ..." and is still recited at official meetings today.



June 1919

The National Executive Committee of The American Legion adopts The American Legion Emblem.

September 1919

The U.S. Congress charts The American Legion.

November 1919

The American Legion convenes its first annual national convention in Minneapolis. The constitution and preamble are officially adopted, a resolution is passed in support of the Boy Scouts of America, and delegates approve by a 361-323 vote to locate its National Headquarters in Indianapolis.

August 1921

The U.S. Veterans Bureau, forerunner of the Veterans Administration, is created as a result of efforts by The American Legion.

June 1923

The first Flag Code, adopted by Congress in 1942, is drafted during a conference called in Washington by The American Legion.

Parting thoughts from outgoing VA secretary

VA Secretary R. James Nicholson announced in July that he is leaving his cabinet post and returning to the private sector no later than Oct. 1. A former ambassador to the Holy See and past chairman of the Republican National Committee, he was appointed by President Bush in February 2005. Here are some of the statements he made the week he announced his plans:

On the state of VA: *"The VA is a dynamic organization dedicated to serving our nation's finest citizens – our veterans. It has been an honor and privilege to lead the VA during this historic time for our men and women who have worn the uniform. We have accomplished so much, and the VA is always striving to improve our services to veterans."*

On his future: *"This coming February, I turn 70 years old, and I feel it is time for me to get back into business, while I still can."*

What he told VA employees: *"VA has come a long way in meeting the growing needs and expectations of our veterans, and you deserve the credit."*

On the challenge of running VA: *"This is a very big government agency that, among many other things, sees over 1 million patients a week in its health-care system, and is doing a world-class job. The American people can feel proud about the way we are treating our veterans."*

On his boss: *"The president and the Congress have been very supportive, and for that I am grateful as well. (President Bush) has given me terrific opportunities to serve my country, and under his strong and supportive leadership, it has been a real privilege."*

What American Legion National Commander Paul A. Morin had to say about the departure of Nicholson: *"We thank him for his service both as a U.S. Army veteran and for his leadership as head of the nation's largest health-care system. We look forward to working with his successor on continuing to improve health benefits and services to America's veterans."*



Noel St. John

VA offers national suicide hotline

A 24-hour national VA suicide-prevention hotline was scheduled to begin operations by Aug. 31. Staffed by mental health professionals and based at the Canandaigua VA Medical Center in New York state, the program also includes training for clinicians and non-clinicians on warning signs for suicide.

The VA number is provided in conjunction with the national suicide prevention hotline. A VA option on the line will direct veterans to a VA professional who will immediately address the situation. The veteran will then be referred to a local suicide prevention coordinator for follow-up.

Hotline number
1-800-273-talk

July 1925

American Legion Baseball program begins.

1931

Membership reaches the 1 million mark.

June 1935

The first American Legion Boys State is convened in Springfield, Ill.

June 1938

The final round of The American Legion's first annual National High School Oratorical Contest is held in Norman, Okla.

September 1942

The Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion is changed for the first and only time since its creation in 1919: the word "War" is changed to "Wars."

October 1942

The American Legion's charter is amended to allow World War II veterans to join.

December 1943

Past National Commander Harry W. Colmery writes in longhand on hotel stationery the first draft of what will later become the "GI Bill of Rights," later regarded as the most important piece of social



Special Collections Research Center; NCSU Libraries

legislation enacted in the 20th century, which educated and made homeowners of millions of veterans, effectively inventing the American middle class.

June 1944

The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 – The GI Bill – is signed into law by President Franklin Roosevelt.



[FOREIGN AFFAIRS]

Transactions with Tehran

To document and track major financial transactions between Iran and the rest of the world this decade, the American Enterprise Institute has created "Global Investment in Iran," an interactive Web-based tool.

NATION	TRANSACTIONS	TOTAL VALUE
China	31	\$101.618 billion
India	9	\$79.942 billion
France	66	\$30.253 billion
Germany	71	\$26.151 billion
Italy	43	\$25.467 billion
United Kingdom	37	\$12.784 billion
Australia	2	\$4.02 billion
United States	9	\$3.791 billion
Russia	9	\$3.3 billion
Canada	4	\$2.9 billion

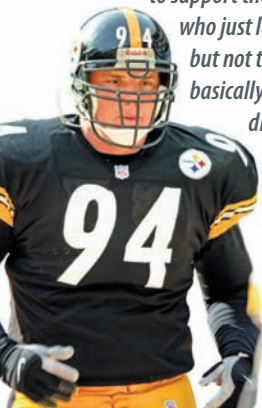
Source: www.aei.org

[ACTIVE DUTY]

"The way I look at it, we're spreading freedom, and you have to support the troops and you have to support the war. You can't just tell some Marine who just lost his buddy that we supported you but not the war, because in that case you're basically saying that Marine, his buddy, just died for nothing. We're one team."

Lance Cpl. Jeremy Staat, a former Pittsburgh Steeler who was motivated by his former college roommate to move from the football field to the battlefield. Staat's former college roommate was the late Pat Tillman, an

Army Ranger who starred for the Arizona Cardinals before leaving the NFL in 2002 to fight in the war on terrorism. Staat began a seven-month tour in Iraq last spring.



Getty

[FOREIGN AFFAIRS]

Experienced abusers take seats on human-rights council

The new roster of the U.N. Human Rights Council, which replaced the widely discredited U.N. Human Rights Commission, proves again that the United Nations is not really serious about promoting, monitoring or protecting basic human rights. Member states include:

CHINA It operates a vast network of slave-labor camps populated by people sentenced for political crimes and religious activities; a State Department report on Beijing cites "restrictions on freedom of speech and the press... instances of extrajudicial killings; torture and coerced confessions of prisoners; and the use of forced labor, including prison labor."

SAUDI ARABIA Washington has condemned the Saudis for "beatings and other abuses ... arbitrary arrest and detention ... denial of fair public trials; exemption from the rule of law for some individuals ... significant restriction of civil liberties ... severe violations of religious freedom."

RUSSIA It has been for "significant human-rights problems, including alleged government involvement in politically motivated abductions, disappearances and unlawful killings in Chechnya."

CUBA This communist holdover has been cited for "frequent harassment, beatings, and threats against political opponents by government-recruited mobs, police and state security officials; frequent arbitrary arrest and detention of human-rights advocates ... denial of fair trial, particularly to political prisoners ... severe limitations on freedom of speech and press; denial of peaceful assembly and association; restrictions on freedom of movement."

For good measure, the council officially closed its investigations of Cuba and Belarus, both serial human-rights violators.



Image Zoo

MILESTONES IN AMERICAN LEGION HISTORY**May 1946**

A \$50,000 grant from The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary is presented to a small, struggling organization, the American Heart Association, to inaugurate a nationwide program for the study, prevention, and treatment of rheumatic heart disease.

1946

The first Boys Nation is organized.



1947 American Legion Boys Nation President Edmond Gong meets with President Harry S. Truman.

August 1946

Membership reaches 3 million.

September 1949

The American Legion elects its first World War II veteran as national commander.

May 1950

The American Legion votes to contribute funds to the field of mental health with the provision that the three major mental health organizations then in existence become one. The National Association for Mental Health is born later that year.

December 1950

Korean War veterans are approved for membership in The American Legion.

July 1954

The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation is formed, a program that in time will distribute over \$5 million for youth programs and projects.

September 1966

Vietnam War veterans are approved for membership.

August 1969

The National Executive Committee establishes the National Emergency Fund in the aftermath of Hurricane Camille.



AP

[STATEMENT]

"It is unconscionable that six years after the worst terrorist attack in history, America's borders are still not secure. However, awarding amnesty to foreigners who have broken the law is not and will never be the way to make America more secure."

"Some of the terrorists who plotted to murder Americans at Fort Dix fit the definition of what many call 'undocumented workers.' They are illegal aliens, and that is the term I will continue to use. The American Legion is willing to work with our leaders in reforming immigration, but there can be no reform until our borders and ports are secure."

American Legion National Commander Paul A. Morin, following the late-June Senate vote that essentially killed any attempt to reform immigration until after the 2008 elections.

[HOMELESSNESS]

VA grants en route in 37 states

Homeless veterans will receive transitional housing thanks to \$24 million in VA grant money through 92 community and faith-based organizations in 37 states across the country. The grants were announced in July.

- Fifty-three organizations will receive \$10 million to provide about 1,000 transitional housing beds under VA's per-diem program.
- Thirty-six groups will receive \$12 million for programs for homeless veterans who are seriously mentally or terminally ill, elderly and frail, or women, including women with children.
- Three organizations will receive about \$2 million for various technical assistance projects.

www.va.gov/homeless



Index Stock

May 1972

The American Legion launches a Halloween safety program, the only national program of its kind.

➔ August 1982

The American Legion presents a \$1 million check to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund to help build "The Wall" in Washington. Member donations make The American Legion the single largest contributor to the project.



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Prescription claims through this program will not be eligible for reimbursement through a state Medicaid program.

RAPID FIRE

[VERBATIM]

A well-designed and carefully-targeted fat tax could be a useful tool for reducing the burden of food-related disease."

An Oxford University study, claiming that a "fat tax" on sugary and fatty foods could save 3,200 lives in Britain each year

"Frankly, Michael Moore is an example of why the health-care system costs so much in this country."

Former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, on the filmmaker's documentary "Sicko," which calls for an overhaul of the U.S. health-care system. Huckabee lost 110 pounds and became an avid runner after being diagnosed with diabetes.

"I felt it was a fairly small thing, just hitting and swearing at the workers and not giving them wages."

Heng Tinghan, who is accused of virtually enslaving workers in Hongtong County, Shanxi province, China

"It's almost like the Reichstag fire, kind of reminds me of that. After the Reichstag was burned, they blamed the communists for it, and it put the leader of that country in a position where he could basically have authority to do whatever he wanted."

Muslim Rep. Keith Ellison, D-Minn., comparing the 9/11 terror attacks to the 1933 destruction of the German parliament, thought to have been burned down by the Nazis in order to justify Hitler's seizure of emergency powers.

"The candidates that can't face Fox can't face al Qaeda."

Fox News Chairman Roger Ailes on the Nevada Democratic Party's decision to cancel a debate featuring Democratic presidential candidates, which Fox News was scheduled to host in Reno in August

"Those who guard us while we sleep – and who are fighting in Anbar province now, and in the southern provinces of Afghanistan, and taking down these people – need every atom of support we can give them."

Author and commentator Christopher Hitchens

"I don't know whether this will be decades, but the average counter-insurgency is somewhere around a 9-or 10-year endeavor."

Gen. David Petraeus, head of U.S. forces in Iraq, who is due to return to Washington this month to report on the surge's progress

"I don't know what Arkansan is for chutzpah, but this is a gigantic case of it."

White House spokesman Tony Snow, after former President Clinton criticized President Bush's decision to commute the prison sentence of Lewis "Scooter" Libby

MILESTONES



July 1983

The American Legion announces its sponsorship of an independent study on the effects of exposure to Agent Orange on Vietnam War veterans. The results of "The American Legion-Columbia University Study of Vietnam-era Veterans" were presented to Congress in 1989, which led to an ongoing effort to provide benefits and compensation for affected veterans.

August 1983

The American Legion elects its first Korean War national commander.

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[LIVING WELL]

Bioterrorism demands agile, flexible response

BY DR. JOEL KUPERSMITH

Earlier this year, the polling company Zogby and UPI asked more than 10,000 Americans to name the biggest global health risk. The top answer was bioterrorism, ahead of avian flu and HIV/AIDS.

Some experts say the use of bacteria, viruses or toxins to harm people or the environment is not likely. They assert that terrorists would need great expertise to spread germs or toxins on a large scale. Others, however, worry that the technology and know-how required to mount a bioterror attack is becoming more accessible. One can buy small, disposable "bioreactors" – chambers in which organisms can be grown – and propagate viruses using instructions found on the Internet.

If terrorists did manage to pull off a large-scale bioterror attack against our food or water supply the results could be disastrous. So public health officials take seriously their responsibility to prepare our nation for bioterrorism.

Since 9/11, VA has stepped-up bioterrorism training and education for staff as part of its overall disaster-preparedness plan. VA physicians and research-

ers are integral to the national effort.

In the *New England Journal of Medicine* last year, Dr. David Relman, chief of infectious diseases at the Palo Alto VA, stressed the need for a flexible defense system against bioterrorism.



Corbis

Relman cautioned against focusing only on known threats and scenarios:

"We need methods and technologies that can generate effective diagnostics, therapeutics, and prophylactics against a new or variant infectious agent within days or weeks after its characterization," he

wrote. Other VA investigators actively involved in the fight against bioterrorism include Dr. Karl Hostetler, of the San Diego VA, who has worked with Army scientists to develop an oral drug against smallpox, and Manhattan-based Dr. Susan Zolla-Pazner, who is researching antidotes to anthrax.

Joel Kupersmith, M.D., is chief research and development officer for the Veterans Health Administration.

History of bioterrorism

1346 Attackers catapulted the cadavers of plague victims over city walls, hoping to spread disease and terrorize inhabitants.

1940s Japan released plague-infected fleas over Chinese cities, contaminating wells and food and infecting residents.

1969 President Nixon halted the U.S. offensive biological weapons program – begun during the Cold War – and ordered the destruction of stockpiled pathogens.

1972 America joined 100 other nations in signing the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, banning the research and use of such weapons.

2001 Letters containing anthrax spores were mailed to several media and legislative offices, killing five people and infecting 17 others.

MILESTONES IN AMERICAN LEGION HISTORY

September 1988

A Vietnam War veteran is, for the first time, elected national commander of The American Legion.

November 1988

The longstanding objectives of The American Legion to improve adjudication procedures for veterans' claims are achieved by the creation of the U.S. Court of Veterans Appeals. Most provisions contained in the law are included in the Veterans Reassurance Act, which was written by The American Legion and introduced in Congress in 1988.

March 1989

The Veterans Administration, with strong Legion support, becomes the Department of Veterans Affairs, a Cabinet-level division of the federal government.

August 1990

The American Legion files suit against the federal government for failure to conduct a congressionally mandated study of the effects of Agent Orange on the health of Vietnam War veterans.

October 1990

The Family Support Network is formed by The American Legion to assist the families of military personnel deployed during Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm in the Middle East. A year later, it becomes a permanent program.



October 1990

Veterans of Lebanon, Grenada and Panama hostilities are approved for membership.

June 1991

The American Legion's first annual Junior Shooting Sports National Air Rifle Championships are conducted at the Olympic Training Center at Colorado Springs, Colo.

December 1991

Veterans of Desert Shield/Desert Storm are approved for membership.

1993

American Legion Riders chapters begin to form through various posts across the country.

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[LEGIONNAIRES IN ACTION]

DISTRICT 7, DEPARTMENT OF NEBRASKA: Halfway through his tenure as District 7 commander, Virgil Blum, an Army Reserve supply sergeant, was activated and sent to Iraq. But he did not let half-a-world of distance stand in the way of his membership goals. He called at all hours of the night and frequently e-mailed back to his district officers in order to achieve his 100-percent target for the year. Also while deployed in Iraq, he found time to send out a monthly newsletter to every post commander in the district.

Blum, who spent nearly a year deployed, said he felt a sense of family obligation to fulfill his Legion responsibilities. "My father-in-law's father started Post 265," he said. "My father-in-law is the department finance officer. The American Legion is really a family thing for us."

Nebraska National Executive Committeeman Mike Landkamer said the district rallied behind Blum. "Everyone wanted to do it for Virgil," he said. "We set up membership teams, and everyone worked hard to make sure we hit 100 percent for Virgil. I personally signed up a lot of new members. Once we get them in and they see what we do, they're going to stick around."

POST 235, STOCKTON, CALIF. With just 21 Legionnaires, Post 235 has one of the smallest memberships in the Department of California. Member-for-member, however, it may be one of the most active. The post sponsors an annual citizenship essay competition for local youth. It supports Boys State, participates in prayer breakfasts and local fundraisers and helping provide holiday baskets for children and needy veterans. Members visit veterans in long-term care facilities and place flags on veterans' graves on Memorial Day. It is also one few remaining Jane Delano posts – named for a World War I nurse. All members are women. "We're veterans, and veterans have a commitment to their community, a duty to give back," Commander Priscilla Donahue Silvery says. "It's important for the public and young women to see that women have served, are proud of having served, and that it's OK to serve their country."

[BOYS NATION]



Benjamin Wallace, 17, speaks at Boys Nation.

Delaware teen elected Boys Nation president

A Delaware high-school student was elected president and an Indiana teen vice president of The American Legion's 61st Boys Nation at Marymount University in Virginia in July.

Benjamin Wallace, Hockessin, Del., was elected president. The 17-year-old son of Paul and Lisa Wallace is a three-sport athlete in high school and finished second in a national mock trial competition. He plans to study law in college but has yet to choose a school.

"I am honored to be elected and looking forward to serving this fine group of gentlemen at Boys Nation," Wallace said after his election. He was sponsored by R.C. DuPont Post 18 in Claymont, Del. "Serving here in a representative capacity provides the unique opportunity to express the wants and needs of my generation."

Justin Kingsolver, Fishers, Ind., was elected as Boys Nation vice president. He was sponsored by Lowell Beaver Post 470 in Fishers, Ind.

MILESTONES IN AMERICAN LEGION HISTORY

April 1993

The first class of recently discharged veterans begins training in Sterling, Va., for eventual placement in well-paying jobs in the construction industry. The landmark training and job-placement program is a joint effort by The American Legion and the Laborers' International Union of North America.

➔ August 1994

The American Legion announces creation of the Citizens Flag Alliance, a coalition of organizations and

individual citizens, to work for a constitutional amendment to give Congress the power to protect the American flag from physical desecration, following a 5-4 1989 Supreme Court ruling defining flag desecration as a form of free speech.



1996

The American Legion Web site is launched.

May 1997

Departments and Posts are encouraged to work with their local Children's Miracle Network-affiliated children's hospitals.

➔ October 2001

The American Legion revives the Blue-Star Banner program to acknowledge homes with loved ones fighting terrorism for the U.S. Armed Forces.



October 2001

The terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, lead the National Executive Committee to establish the American Legacy Scholarship Program to provide college funds for the children of servicemembers killed in action on or after the attacks.

May 2002

The American Legion becomes actively involved in the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) project, the most comprehensive effort to realign VA health-care services and facilities since World War II.

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Dr. Steffanie Seaver PSY.D is an expert in the area of interpersonal relationships. Researcher, author and accomplished public speaker, she has lectured nationwide for over a decade. Dr. Seaver has also been involved with several publications covering relationship and lifestyle issues.

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Jason M.
Manhattan Beach, CA

A: Well Jason,

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[CAREERS]

JOB FAIR CALENDAR

American Legion partners RecruitMilitary, LLC, and Military.com are coordinating seven veteran career fairs this month.

MILITARY.COM

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SEPT. 5 Boston

SEPT. 18 Fort Bragg, N.C.

SEPT. 25 Norfolk, Va.

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SEPT 18 Raleigh, N.C.

SEPT 27 Chicago

[ECONOMICS]

How to take your talents to the global job market

Veteran job candidates often have skills and experience attractive to employers from other nations. If you're considering international employment, then you must know the following:

- 1 The words "resume" and "CV" (curriculum vitae) generally refer to the same thing – a document that highlights your professional, military and educational experience. The terms are often used interchangeably. When there is a difference, a CV is typically longer with more detail about publications, speaking, affiliations, continuing education, and more.
- 2 Research each country to identify its standards for how to present your employment – in chronological order (from past to present) or reverse-chronological (most recent to past). The latter is used most often in the United States, the former in many other countries. If no specific guidelines are recommended, use reverse-chronology.
- 3 Detail your educational credentials, degrees, courses, licenses and certifications, including course/program name, university, location and numbers of hours.
- 4 Be sure to use industry-specific and job-specific terminology that will be known the world over.
- 5 If you are submitting your resume in English, be sure to find out if the country in which you're applying uses "American" English or "British" English.
- 6 Include your foreign-language skills as well as foreign experience (e.g., duty stations, travel, working and/or living abroad).
- 7 Computer and technology skills are essential, no matter the job, company or country. Include yours in detail.
- 8 Different countries use different sized paper. The paper standard in the US is 8½-by-11 inches; the paper standard in Europe is 210-by-297 mm (known as A-4). Use the "page setup" function in your computer software to select the correct format.
- 9 Work permits and visa regulations vary from country to country and may take months to acquire. Be thorough in investigating requirements for specific countries by contacting each country's embassy for detailed information.

Wendy S. Enelow is co-author of "Expert Resumes for Military-to-Civilian Transitions" and provides resume-writing workshops at veteran job fairs nationwide.

MILESTONES IN AMERICAN LEGION HISTORY**November 2003**

The "I Am Not a Number" campaign is launched to show the frustration thousands of veterans experience over lack of access to VA health-care facilities. The campaign leads to "A System Worth Saving," an annual VA facility site-inspection and reporting program headed by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation division.

August 2005

Delegates at the National Convention in Honolulu adopt Resolution 169 "Support for the War On

Terrorism" that calls for people everywhere "to stand united in the global war on terrorism, and united in their support of the troops who are engaged in protecting our values and way of life."

Fall 2005

The American Legion distributes nearly \$2 million in cash grants, which is restored within a year by member donations, to help veterans and their communities recover from the devastation of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma along the U.S. Gulf Coast.

May 2006

The American Legion participates in "Salute Our Heroes: The Veterans Job Fair and Career Expo" held in Chicago, the first in a series of partnerships with public and private entities to help veterans find good jobs or pursue dreams of business ownership.



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How to Submit a Reunion

The American Legion Magazine publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to *The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206, fax (317) 630-1280 or e-mail reunions@legion.org.

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are published free of charge.

Due to the large number of reunions, *The American Legion Magazine* will publish a group's listing only once a year. Notices should be sent at least six months prior to the reunion to ensure timely publication.

Other Notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim. Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name,

telephone number and e-mail address. Send notices to *The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206, fax (317) 630-1280 or e-mail reunions@legion.org.

The magazine will not publish the names of individuals, only the name of the unit from which you seek people. Listings are published free of charge.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life memberships by their posts. This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership. Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to *The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to *The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Comrades in Distress, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206. Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

AIR FORCE/ARMY AIR FORCES

5th Comm Grp/934th Sig Bn, Albuquerque, NM, 10/15-20, Chuck Siegmund, (501) 985-1310, sparkyarky@comcast.net; **20th Ftr Wing, Denver**, 9/19-22, John Walters, (720) 344-0504, j.walt@comcast.net; **39th Eng Bn (Vietnam)**, Washington, 11/8-12, Gale D. Helser, (608) 225-6090, galehelser@peoplepc.com; **61st TC5**, Dayton, OH, 9/19-22, Joe Noah, (434) 374-2781, noahbjr@kerlake.com; **90th Strat Recon Wing**, Omaha, NE, 9/18-22, Chuck Hale, (785) 865-5794, chuckhale@earthlink.net; **312th Bomb Grp 5th AF**, St. Louis, 10/11-14, Mickey Sherman, (405) 755-0315, havoc5af@yahoo.com; **363rd/161st Mustang Ftr Grp**, Columbus, OH, 9/27-30, Arthur M. Mimler, (209) 966-2713, parkerboze@yahoo.com; **366th Ftr Assn (All Eras)**, Dallas, 10/11-15, John France, (817) 860-2780, luv_2_fly@sbcglobal.net; **379th Bomb Grp (Heavy) (WWII)**, Chicago, 9/5-9, T. Cabanski, (303) 697-6265; **3919th AB Sqdn RAF (Fair Ford, England, 1956-1960)**, San Antonio, Gil Gabriel, (770) 252-1328, bebgolf@aol.com

ARMY

2nd Bn 7th Cav A Co (1966-1967), Columbus, GA, 9/20-22, Sherman Flanders, (703) 684-6984, s.flanders@comcast.net; **3rd Admin Co 3rd Inf Div (Wurzburg, Germany, 1966-1969)**, Nashville, TN, 10/12-14, Gerald Campos, (410) 519-4369, gscdcampos@comcast.net; **6th Med Supply Depot (Korea)**, Orlando, FL, 10/18-20, John Rallis, (321) 231-3771, jrallis@cfl.r.com; **9th Ord Tng Bn**, Las Vegas, 10/16-18, Eugene A. Burnett, (631) 491-9137; **26th Eng Bn Cbt**, Indianapolis, 10/18-20, R. Kasting, (574) 753-4375, ffgriss@myvine.com; **32nd Inf Rgt Assn "The Queen's Own"**, Syracuse, NY, 9/26-30, Helen Dyckson, (727) 697-2135, heland@verizon.net; **86th Blackhawk Div Assn**, New Orleans, 9/10-14, Robert Bookbinder, (954) 974-3511, carconed@aol.com; **92nd Armd FA Bn "Red Devils" (Korea)**, Savannah, GA, 11/4-7, Guy McMenemy, (281) 469-2819, bravcannons@sbcglobal.net; **164th Cbt Eng**, Winchester, VA, 10/7-9, Glade Wittwer, (703) 708-4473, plwgs@yahoocom; **187th Assault Heli Co (Vietnam, 1967-1972)**, Portland, OR, 11/8-11, Al Major, (503) 281-4781, rat34@comcast.net; **321st Trans Co "Can Do"**, (Long Binh, Vietnam, 1967-1969), Bar Harbor, ME, Sept, John Hayde, (816) 863-3553; **335th Radio Research Co & Opns Co (Can Tho, Vietnam)**, San Antonio, 10/5-7, Jerry Cornforth, (979) 696-0975, jandw@suddenlink.net; **532nd EBSR**, San Antonio, 9/26-29, Martin Velasquez, (210) 735-4276; **560th MP Co (Pusan, Korea, 1952-1954)**, Branson, MO, 9/11-14, Bob Simon, (989) 792-3718, bobsimoncondo@charter.net; **698th AAA Gun Bn All Btrys**, Pigeon Forge, TN, 10/11-14, Kenneth Elkins, (251) 633-7616; **ASA Baumholder FS 8611 DU (Baumholder, Germany)**, Orlando, 10/8-12, Buck O'Connor, (904) 268-4560, rdocon@bellsouth.net; **Bravo Co 2nd 12th Cav (Vietnam)**, Alexandria, VA, 11/9-12, Al Zeller, (517) 525-1578, zeller@nsl.msu.edu; **Bravo Co 76th Sig Bn (Fort**

Huachuca, AZ, 1960-1961 & Butzbach, Germany, 1961-1965), Nashville, TN, 10/1-5, H. Deering, (817) 454-2421, aromega@aol.com

COAST GUARD

Arundel, Buckthorn, Cherry, Maple, Objibwa, Point Steele, White Lupine, Wire & 83359, 65024-D (Chockberry), 55030, 45305, 49414, 45308, 49404 (All Years) (NY, Saugerties, NY & Burlington, VT), Sackett Harbor, NY, Gordon Koscher, (330) 274-2927; **Joseph T. Dickman APA 13 (WWII)**, Wildwood, NJ, 10/8-12, B.G. Grossman, (301) 762-3000

JOINT

1st Flt Det (SOG) (Nha Trang AB, Vietnam), Biloxi, MS, 10/9-12, Roger Gibson, (228) 209-1180, rgibson2403@aol.com

MARINES

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Joseph T. Schneider, Dept. of South Dakota. Dept. Cmdr. 1967-1968.
Joseph A. Stacy, Dept. of France. Nat'l Law & Order Cmte. Memb. 1963-1964 (Dept. of Illinois), Nat'l Mmbrshp. & Post Activ. Cmte. Memb. 1976-1984 (Dept. of Illinois) and Dept. Cmdr. 1993-1994 (Dept. of Italy).
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*The older you get, the tougher it is to lose weight.
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A SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHER was discussing the Ten Commandments with her class of 5- and 6-year-olds. After explaining the commandment to “honor thy father and thy mother,” she asked, “Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?”

Without missing a beat, one little boy answered, “Thou shall not kill.”

GRETA WAS AN OLD, grandmotherly type. She was well-known for her faith and talking about it. Every morning she would go out on the front porch and shout, “Praise the Lord!” Her next-door neighbor would shout back, “There ain’t no Lord!”

Greta was very poor, so the neighbor decided to prove his point by buying a large bag of groceries and placing it at her door. The next morning, she went to the porch, and seeing the groceries, she shouted, “Praise the Lord!”

The neighbor stepped out from behind a tree in the yard and said, “I brought those groceries, and there ain’t no Lord.”

Greta smiled and shouted, “Lord, you not only sent me food but you made the devil pay for it!”

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“Do you have it in my shape?”



“I hope this isn’t your idea of a happy childhood.”



“Yes, you’ve come at a bad time. I’m home.”

A MAN NAMED JOHN was 32 years old and still single. One day a friend asked, “Why aren’t you married? Can’t you find a woman who would make a good wife?”

“Actually,” John replied, “I’ve found women I wanted to marry, but when I bring them home to meet my parents, my mother doesn’t like them.”

His friend thought for a moment and said, “You should find a girl who’s just like your mother.”

A few months later John and his friend met again, and his friend asked, “Did you find the perfect girl? Did your mother like her?”

With a frown on his face, John answered, “Yes, I found the perfect girl. She was just like my mother. You were right. My mother liked her very much.”

“Then what’s the problem?”

“My father doesn’t like her.”



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Stretch-Twill Gentlemen's JEANS

**Not Fit-For-a-while or
Fit-For-some-times, but
FIT FOREVER!**

We took your favorite polyester twill and added just a touch of spandex. You still get the handsome look of denim but now with a little extra g-i-v-e & plenty of extra comfort!

Each side
EXPANDS
2 full inches!

Medium
Blue

Even the
Fabric
STRETCHES
in all
directions!

Black

Grey
Heather

Navy

**FREE
Postage!**



Tried and True Fit, every time you wear them. Hidden side inserts lend a total of 4 inches of S-T-R-E-T-C-H around the middle so you always have room! Classic gent's jeans tailoring: 2 front pockets, 2 back pockets, and a coin pocket for take-alongs, plus center back loop to make your belt stay put. They wash and dry without a worry, fade or wrinkle! Truly jeans you can wear with confidence!
Order right now! The Postage is FREE!

Imported

Haband!
Duke Habernickel
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Peckville, PA 18452



Stretch-Twill JEANS **\$19.99*** per pair when you buy 2
2 for 39.98 3 for 56.95

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COMFORT, ORDER
YOUR USUAL
WAIST SIZE!**

Waist: 32 34
36 38 40 42 44

***Big Men**

(\$5.50 more per pair):
46 48 50 52 54
Inseams: S(27-28)
M(29-30) L(31-32)

Haband
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Peckville, PA 18452
Send ___ jeans. I enclose \$_____ purchase price plus \$7.99 toward postage. In GA add sales tax.

FREE Postage on this order!

☺	77H-06068	WHAT WAIST?	WHAT INSEAM?	HOW MANY?
03	NAVY			
5A	MEDIUM BLUE			
6J	GREY HEATHER			
01	BLACK			

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